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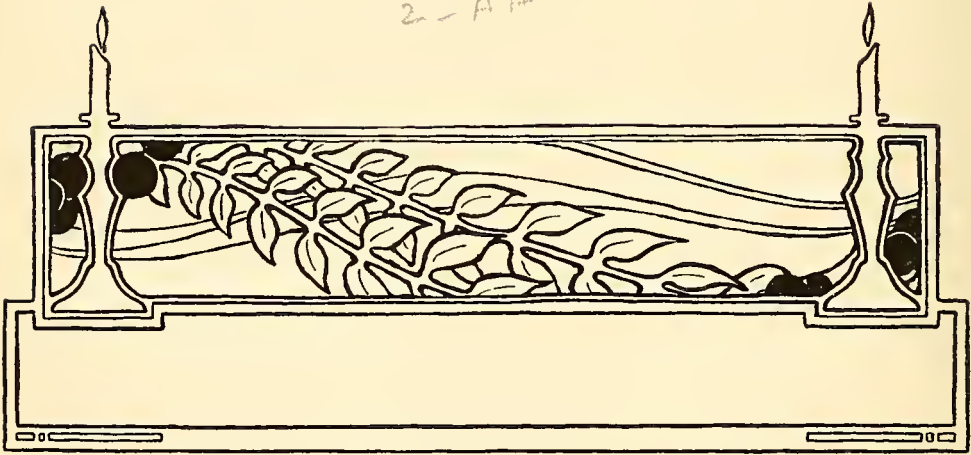
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1. Watkins family
2. Pioneer life — U.S. — Middle West

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ANNALS OF OUR ANCESTORS

BY

JULIA WATKINS FROST







Benjamin Utter Watkins

# ANNALS OF OUR ANCESTORS

ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS  
OF HISTORY IN

## THE WATKINS FAMILY

BY  
JULIA WATKINS FROST



CHICAGO  
PRIVATELY PRINTED  
1913





Soon the last link with the distant past of our family will be gone beyond recall, and so, in the evening of my life, I have felt constrained to write these annals of our ancestors as they have come down to me—unsullied by grossness or dark blots; records of those who, in their simplicity, honesty, and brave endeavor, are worthy of remembrance to our latest generations. To all branches of

### OUR WATKINS FAMILY

I inscribe these pages with the affection of my heart and the interest of my whole mind.

JULIA WATKINS FROST.

Finished in the seventy-fifth year of my age.

December, 1912.







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Life looks beautiful from both extremities. Prospect and retrospect shine alike in a light so divine as to suggest that the first catches some radiance from the gates not yet closed, by which the soul has entered, and that the last is illuminated from the opening realm into which it is soon to pass. Now that they are all gone, I wrap myself in dreams of them and live over the old days with them. Even the feeblest memory, that cannot hold for a moment the events of to-day, keeps a firm grasp upon the things of youth and rejoices in its treasures. It is a curious process, this feeling of one's way back to childhood, and clothing one's self again with the little frame — the buoyant, healthy, restless bundle of muscles and nerves — and the old relations of careless infancy.— *Selected from a favorite story — Arthur Bonnicastle, by J. G. Holland.*



## CHAPTER I

### WHEN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY WAS NEW



SEPTEMBER 14, 1811, must ever be regarded as an important date in the annals of the Watkins family, for upon that day was born to our grandparents, James and Rachel Badgely Watkins, their third and last child, Benjamin Utter Watkins. This record I find in the old family Bible, written with a quill pen by some ancestor who long ago passed on from sight. What memories come to me, their granddaughter, on this one hundredth anniversary of the birth of their son and our father, Benjamin Watkins! I am happy, in beginning this history of our family, to pay a tribute to so worthy an ancestor, and I feel as I write that we have just cause to be proud of the root from which this present family sprang.

James Watkins was born in Elizabethtown, New Jersey, in the reign of our then "Sovereign Lord, King George III," on Saturday, July 30, 1768. His father, Joseph Watkins, was of English descent, and his name would mark him as of Welsh origin. It seems little that we know of him, and yet we do possess some authentic information concerning this ancestor. He was a mechanic of Elizabethtown before the Revolution, and once owned a sailboat plying between a port in New Jersey and New York City. He lost all his property in the collapse of Revolutionary currency. He married Elizabeth Spinning,

and the names of their children were John (Jonathan), Hezekiah, Joseph, James, Elizabeth, and Sarah. The older sons took part in the Revolution. It has come down to us that our great-grandfather, Joseph Watkins, was a man of fine mind and great energy. His wife, Elizabeth Spinning, died July 5, 1787; he passed away about the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Our father seems to have had no memory of any of his uncles or aunts excepting the eldest uncle, whom he called Uncle "Jonathan," and the third, Joseph, who settled not far away from our grandfather James, in Hamilton, Ohio. My father records that the physique of his father's family was "characterized by tall stature and rough, bony features." However, our grandfather had finer features and was better looking than the others seem to have been. He was about five feet seven inches in height and very hardy and strong.

Our father's maternal grandparents were Robert and Rachel Vrieland Badgley. Robert Badgley was born of English parents, and he and all his sons served the Colonies in the struggle for freedom. We do not know just what effect the Revolution had on his family and fortune, but he himself died shortly after peace was brought about at the close of the conflict. "The characteristics of his family were a largely developed muscular system, stature a little above the average, and great personal beauty." His wife, Rachel Vrieland, was of Dutch descent, and was either brought from Holland when very young or was born upon the high seas when her parents were *en route* to America. However it was, she missed an education in the fatherland, and it is related of her father that he would not send his daughter to an English school; so, as there were no Dutch schools, she grew up without learning to read until she was taught by her own children. They thought her "by nature a superior woman," and she was greatly beloved of them.

We have the record of the Badgley family back to Anthony Badgley, who was born about the middle of the seventeenth century. He was our thrice great-grandfather, and in 1700 lived in Flushing, New Jersey, where he had a plantation. In

1668 there was made "an exact list of all ye inhabitants' names within ye town of Flushing and Points of Old and Young Freemen, white or black." In that list is found "Anthony Badgley, Elizabeth, his wife, Anthony, George, Phebe, their children, and 1 negro." Under date of March 3, 1740, Anthony Badgley petitioned the authorities for a warrant to survey a lot in Flushing called the Hemp Lot, belonging to him, so as to end the encroachments of Thomas Hedger and others. He was in comfortable circumstances, for in 1707 he was one of a company composed of wealthy men who purchased, through its agent, Peter Sommans, a large tract of 17,000 acres in New Jersey, for which it paid the Indians "200 pounds in money and in goods." This land was 33 miles northwest of Elizabethtown and called New Britain. July, 1711, the tax rate for every inhabitant of Flushing was made out, and Anthony Badgley's share was "23 pounds of bacon, 6 bushels of wheat, 1 bushel of Indian corn." He was a sergeant in Captain Jonathan Wright's company of militia in 1715, and probably died a few years after.

In 1911 our cousin, Frank Sewell Skinner, wrote me an interesting letter about the Badgleys. This relative, living in New York, is a grandson of our great-aunt, Hannah Badgley Scudder, and therefore, as am I, he is a great-grandchild of Robert and Rachel Vrieland Badgley. This is a part of his letter:

"We are traveling home to God in the way our fathers trod. Charles Badgley (through whose letter to your brother William, never sent, I happily learned of you and my valued friend Rosamond) died January 9, 1911, at the home of his niece in Plainfield, N. J., whither he had removed from the old, old home on the mountain only a few months before, he and his brother John having sold the dear farm, which I came very near buying. Appropriately his remains were taken to his lifetime home, and the services were held in the room where the first Sunday school in the section was organized. He was in his eightieth year. John, about ten years younger, is still at Winans.

"The brothers had one hundred and ten acres of the original



four hundred of Grandpa James Badgley, with the old house — the sweetest, quaintest structure, as solid as rock, with its Dutch roof, built in 1725. I know it is solid, for I have slept in it during a storm on the mountain. . There are five hundred apple trees and eight hundred peach trees; rose growing hot-house with about 18,000 square feet under glass, which cost nearly five thousand dollars, with its new boiler; with water coming by hydraulic ram from Blue Brook to the hothouse and the dwelling as well. Their tea roses were in great demand in the New York market, thirty miles away, and they had only to take them to the station, Murray Hill, on the Lackawanna Railroad, but a mile and a half from the place. Sometimes these roses bring twenty-five cents apiece. On the way to the cliff from which you get a view across the Rahway valley, you pass the site of Robert Badgley's home and the birth-place of Rachel. Grandpa Robert's wife Rachel, I learn, had a very sweet and wholesome Dutch ancestry. She descended from the prominent Dutch Van Winkle family, much concerning whom and our Vrielandts was doubtless destroyed in the recent Albany fire. How could they have been so careless with such precious records?"

James Watkins, the fourth son of Joseph Watkins, lost his hearing in 1776 when he was but eight years old. He had measles and went in swimming too soon after the attack, which caused him to take cold and suffer with gatherings in his ears. This trouble totally destroyed his ear-drums and shut from him forever all sound. The last vibrations to which his ears responded were caused by the cannonading on the first Independence Day in the summer of 1776. Of course he remembered some words correctly, but through the long years of silence many imperfections of expression sprang up, till he had a speech of his own. His language was understood by his family but not by strangers. His mother suffered great anxiety when he was recovering lest he should have forgotten what he had previously learned, but it was her joy to find that, although her boy was totally deaf, he remembered how to read and write, and this greatly relieved the difficulty of communicating with him. He was a good penman, and I remember



yet the fine quill pens he made for us. He used to like to set us copies and draw pictures of soldiers for our amusement.

While Joseph Watkins had been what was called "well-to-do" before the Revolution, he had afterward to apprentice out some of his boys to learn trades. Our grandfather was early elected to be a blacksmith and it happened that he was apprenticed to a hard master, who provided but a wretched place for shelter in a log house with a loft beneath a leaky roof. The apprentice was assigned to the loft, where he was awakened at four o'clock on winter mornings by his master pounding on the floor beneath his bed till the house shook. The vibrations awakened in an instant the deaf young man, who often bounded out of bed into a couple of inches of freshly fallen snow. This will serve to illustrate the hardness of his life in a day when the best might seem to us deprivation. Little is known of him during this period, but it is safe to venture the assertion that small attention was given to his training, either mental or moral. It speaks well for his stamina that he did not growl, but stuck to his job, learned his trade, and came out a stalwart man. His inherent goodness is also disclosed by the fact that, in spite of the poor influences and lack of opportunity for the development of the best that was in him during the formative period, and though handicapped by entire deafness, he grew into a man of intelligence and sturdy worth. We know that in the future he displayed natural ability of no mean order, and that the very hardness of his apprenticeship seemed to have prepared him for the great conflict and struggle that awaited the pioneers who turned westward at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Our grandfather was inspired by the love of adventure and was by nature a pioneer. Shut in though he was, there floated into his silence the dreams of the new republic; the thrill of life which was to change the wilderness of the West into a blooming garden was felt amid the stony hills of New Jersey, and by the deaf young blacksmith with great keenness. In some way the stories of returned soldiers were related to him in a manner his understanding could grasp, and these tales from the young West probably inflamed his already

active imagination. These soldiers had doubtless followed Washington over the mountains in defense of the early settlers of Ohio, and brought back thrilling tales of the new land beyond the Alleghanies. The young man, James Watkins, learned with burning interest of great forests where deer and bear, raccoon and opossums, wild turkeys, pigeons, pheasants, and grouse furnished abundant game, while fur producing animals tempted the trapper. There were also tales of the wild forest fruits, crabapples, plums and grapes, besides the delicious wild berries. The sweep of broad rivers with their thousand murmuring rivulets was described; the whirr of mills yet to be sounded in the ears of his fancy. Not only was James Watkins wrought upon by these glowing accounts of natural stores and opportunities awaiting pilgrims to the westward, but his mother-in-law, Rachel Vrieland Badgley, urged him to leave New Jersey for this wonderful new land. After her husband's death she had come to live with her daughter. Our grandmother was of a different temperament from her mother; she was prone to look upon the dark side of any venture; her husband as well was her exact opposite. He had that quality of mind that gave him vision, and the young man who had tried to cultivate the stony land of New Jersey was enough of a seer to make the attempt to find a land more generous than the rough fields about him.

It is small wonder that many of the inhabitants of our then undeveloped eastern coast states, speaking in the light of the twentieth century, when they heard of the fertile West were enthused and willing to risk their all to reach such a promised land. They were quick to believe that wild things from Nature's fields and lairs would furnish plenty to live upon until a cultivated harvest should make yield. In spite of all this enthusiasm we know it took courage for our ancestors to break away from that certain home in the East and to face danger and even death itself in order to found a home in the wilderness of Ohio. It shows to us the quality of their mind and the strength of their purpose.

Their removal from New Jersey to southern Ohio in the last year of the eighteenth century is well worth our remembrance,

for it was indeed an epoch in our generations. We will try to picture the scene of their setting forth on that journey which has meant so much to each one of us and which was made under circumstances so different from the present. We imagine that it caused no small stir in the town of Elizabeth, New Jersey, when James and Rachel Watkins had completed their preparations to start for Ohio. A loaded emigrant wagon stood in front of their first home and the long way westward stretched out before them. Their relatives and neighbors had but the gravest forebodings and recounted with long faces the perils of the way. They pictured great unfordable rivers and mountains so precipitous that emigrant wagons must be taken apart and let down steep places by means of ropes! Nothing, however, could dissuade these progenitors of ours; they had heard of that wonderful land of "corn and wine" that lay beyond the mountains; they had caught the Ohio fever and stood ready to receive what lay in store for them.

Grandfather's anvil and bellows, besides a nail-cutting machine of his own invention, were packed in the wagon containing all the rest of his earthly possessions. As the family walked out from that home for the last time we can well imagine that for a moment their hearts almost stood still at the thought — but there the yoke of oxen stood in place, while old Star, the horse, was tied to the end-gate, and the tar-bucket hung securely fastened to the coupling pole at the rear of this emigrant wagon of the olden time. It was not the moment to grow faint-hearted, and so we see them stepping up on the doubletrees to take their places in the wagon: Grandmother Rachel Badgley with her grandson, Robert Utter; then James Watkins and his wife, Rachel — all are settled at last amid straw and feather beds, while quilts and blankets are spread in the wagon to make them more comfortable. The heavy linen cover is well roped down, making it possible to store much of value to them beneath its arching bows. The oxen begin to toss their heads from side to side, while the driver sits on a board in front with his feet on the doubletree, ready to spring instantly should the beasts take it into their stubborn heads to turn into the wrong road. At last they are ready to

move over hill and valley to the land of their desire — the town of Cincinnati in the valley of the Ohio.

To heighten the sadness of this farewell it must be stated that our grandmother, Rachel Watkins, made at this time a great sacrifice, to which later years gave witness. By a former husband, Benjamin Utter, she had two sons, William and Robert Utter. After the death of her first husband his parents wished their grandson, William Utter, to live with them, and to this the mother was induced to give consent for the time; but when preparations for their removal from New Jersey had been completed and she went over to bid the old people good-bye and lead away her boy, what was her dismay to find them unwilling to give the child up. Here they were all ready to go to Ohio and on the very eve of departure, and the old grandparents persisting that they could not bear to have William taken from them! Neither tears nor entreaties availed, so she left him with them, they promising to take good care of him, to teach him to work, and when he had reached his majority to give him \$50, a horse and saddle and a new suit of clothes, and then to start him riding over the mountains to his mother. That there was no mail service in those days which reached over the Alleghanies made the separation the harder to endure; but this was but a minor deprivation among those our forefathers had to bear in the opening up of paths in the wilderness.

It is little we know of that long journey. Day after day they crept on, camping for dinner and supper and at night spreading out their feather beds in and under the wagon, where they found refreshing sleep. The changing scenes, the life of freedom from routine, and the long summer days in the pure outdoor air made their spirits rise as they progressed. We fancy that even our grandmother's disposition must have felt the cheering influence and that she, too, looked forward hopefully, as did her mother and husband, to the new world which lay before.

They were on the great highway blazed by Washington and Braddock which had formerly been the Appian Way of the savages, the "Great Nemaquin Path." It was during the



Anvil of James Watkins





French and Indian War (1754-1763) that this road was marked out across the Alleghanies. It was the pathway between the East and the West, the national road or pike authorized by Congress March 26, 1806, for which millions of dollars were appropriated. It is much traveled in these days, though not by ox-cart. The luxurious trains of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad speed over that very path our grandparents traversed so slowly in 1800.

I try to picture the party in which three generations were represented; it is little the fancy has to dwell upon as regards the eldest of all, our great-grandmother, Rachel Vrieland Badgley. No record whatever is left of the personal appearance of this brave and cheerful Dutch grandmother, but I well remember my grandmother, Rachel Badgley. In her young womanhood the soft contour of her face must have been sweet beneath some old-fashioned headdress, for in the after years her complexion was the marvel of all who knew her, smooth white with just enough pink to give it that delicate baby beauty which is not often seen in those who have had to struggle with hardship. We fancy that when she rode over the mountains in her youth her fair brown hair must have been touched with white and very long and beautiful. Her eyes were black and expressive and all the more striking in a face so fair with a frame of such light hair. Her figure was large and well-rounded but not out of proportion. She was about five and a half feet tall and must have been at that time a handsome young matron.

James Watkins we see, a muscular young man with black hair and beard but blue eyes, while his fair-haired wife had very dark eyes; our grandparents must have formed a fine contrast in feature and coloring. Little Robert Utter was a round-faced, brown-eyed boy, ready to take in the pleasures of the way, and the representative of childhood in the party.

I wish we knew more of that journey, but our ancestors kept no diaries; they wrote no reminiscences and left no letters behind them, and there was little my grandfather could relate in detail to the children born to him in Ohio, because of his limited speech. We do not know how many thunderstorms they encountered, whether they had company on the way, nor what

the villages that are now cities looked like then; but one incident of the journey has been left us to relate. They had come to a river which, as usual, had to be forded. Old Star was used as aid in such places, so he was attached as a lead for the oxen and James Watkins started over upon his back, while the women and little Robert remained behind in the wagon. About midstream the horse and oxen became detached, but being unable to hear, our grandfather knew nothing of what had happened until he had gained the bank and looked back. There sat the three others in the wagon out in the middle of the river! They were clapping their hands and laughing merrily; but grandfather thought it much too serious for joking, as he had to wade around and get things adjusted again.

While Grandmother Rachel Watkins was not of a hopeful disposition and ever apprehensive of ill-luck, she was a Christian in heart and life and admired and loved her happy and courageous mother. So it was that when the daughter Rachel would feel her courage failing, Mother Rachel would overcome her fears by telling of good things in store for them in the rich new land ahead. As they jogged along they must sometimes have sung the pioneer song:

Arise, my true love, and present me your hand,  
And we'll march in procession to a far distant land,  
Where the girls will card and spin  
And the boys will plow and sow,  
And we'll settle on the banks of the O-hi-o!

At last they did reach "the banks of the O-hi-o," and at Wheeling they "took water" for Columbia. Before starting they bought a flatboat, upon which they loaded the oxen and old Star, the wagon and all their worldly goods, and with them proceeded down the river, having, however, first hired a pilot to pole them along. Their boat was one of those primitive flatboats made from green oak planks, destined later to be built into shelters for Cincinnati's first families.

So it was that our ancestors floated through strange new wilderness scenes to Columbia, a village older than Cincinnati below the mouth of the Little Miami. It is now within the limits of Cincinnati, five miles east of Fountain Square. From



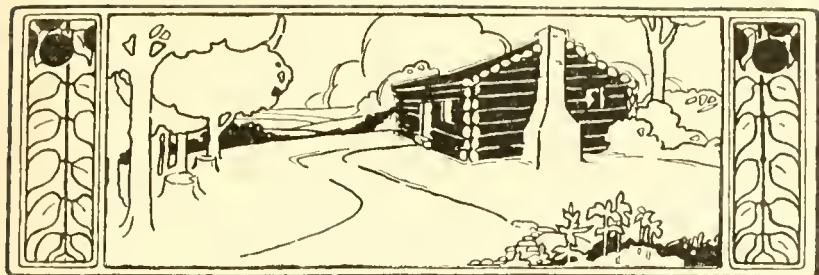
Columbia they made their way through the summer woodland a short distance to Cincinnati, where they were to begin their experiences under conditions entirely new to them. The most prominent building on the site of the present city was Fort Washington, a blockhouse with its stockade. The town built around it had a population of about seven hundred and fifty people, the greater number living, as I have suggested before, in cabins temporarily built from the materials of the flatboats in which their owners had arrived.

Amongst the first thirty holders of the site which became the heart of Cincinnati we find the name of Noah Badgley, who was a great uncle of ours, being the youngest son of our great-grandparents, Robert and Rachel Vrieland Badgley. It may be that our record of him is lost because he was drowned in the Licking River, this probably occurring before our grandparents arrived in Ohio, bringing with them his mother.

We know very little of the actual events connected with their landing in Ohio save that it was in the month of July, 1800, and that grandfather raised a blacksmith shop on the estate of Colonel Israel Ludlow, who laid out the town of Cincinnati. With his invention he probably cut the first nails made west of the Alleghanies. Such was the beginning of their life in the new country of Ohio. Scarcely two years before their arrival the first territorial legislature of the state met in Cincinnati. William D. Ludlow, who was a friend of our father, had distinct memories of Cincinnati at this time. Thomas Dill, Brother William's old friend, reports a speech of William Ludlow's delivered in 1856, in which he describes his boyish remembrances of the little village in the midst of dense wilderness. He speaks of the dangers and turmoils of the time and of the rules the settlers made; for instance: "Each man going out, in morning or afternoon, should carry his rifle, first inspecting it and his ammunition, to be sure all is in order for quick use." If plowing, the rifle was swung over the plowman's back; if hoeing, the gun was placed against the stump of a tree a few steps ahead; if engaged at a log raising, a few sentinels were posted in the brush on the outskirts to give quick warning, and thus protect the men when at

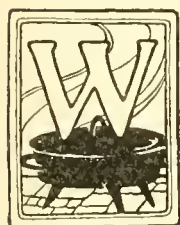
work, and beyond them the women and children around the cabins.

Some six years before our ancestors settled in Cincinnati, General Wayne's impetuous onslaughts had brought about peace from the Indian raids, and the pioneers were not in constant danger as at the first. As we gather up the history of the past century we are glad to think our grandparents were so fortunate in the selection of a place to found a home. They builded more wisely than they could then know when they stopped where they did; they made their choice all unconscious of the future, not forecasting the development that part of Ohio was to see nor dreaming what the coming years would bring to them and their children.



## CHAPTER II

### HOME BUILDING IN OHIO



WHEN our grandparents settled in Cincinnati there was but one brick house in town, though there were a number of small frame houses and many cabins. Their tarrying in the settlement was not long, but it gave them time for deliberation. As James Watkins took a survey of the rugged hills and deep, dark forest lands about the new town of Cincinnati, he declared he would not give a cent an acre for all the rough land about the new town site. He lived to see the rugged hills cleared of their virgin forests and literally hewn down to level building spots, and he could not have bought the rejected land had he covered it with silver dollars. They thus deliberated before they selected a place to begin farming.

Southern Ohio was a heavily timbered country; the soil of stiff yellow clay was well adapted to the growth of walnut, beech, hickory, oak, ash, and maple, with an undergrowth of pawpaw and elder bushes, and wild grapevines of vigorous growth embowering many a noble monarch of the forest. In this deep shade wild turkeys called to their flocks, while partridges drummed on the hollow logs in the early hours of morning. At night wolves howled, and occasionally a panther screamed, like a woman in distress. Sometimes, we are told, the early settlers had to snatch a blazing firebrand from the

hearth in order to frighten away the too inquisitive panther which ventured even to their thresholds.

The shellbark hickory and walnut trees bore a wealth of fine nuts for the frontier urchins, and wild plums, cherries, blackberries, and mulberries yielded a bountiful supply of fruit for wild turkeys, raccoons and opossums, besides being regarded with favor by the children. Beechnuts and sweet acorns with delicious maple sugar and syrup were the joy of many a wildwood camp: even the wilderness country held its delights, and the lessons of old Mother Nature were full of beauty and blessing. There was variety in the life of the frontier; one day was not just like another, for there was ever room for the unexpected, and the forest and wild lands held their own surprises.

It was not long before James and Rachel Watkins ventured forth into this wilderness to begin their share in subduing it and laying the foundations of their home as yet unblessed by mutual offspring. They selected a tract of land on Mill Creek, near Cincinnati, as a place upon which to settle. They made an opening in the deep forest and built a cabin of round logs. Fort Washington had been evacuated two years before, so the Indians were not on the warpath, though people still had a dread of their treachery. While living in the valley of Mill Creek, it happened one Sunday when Rachel Watkins was gone to meeting that a party of Indians on a hunting expedition came upon our grandparents' little cabin and stopped to beg for something. They tried to make the deaf man understand, but, placing his hands to his ears, our grandfather made it plain to the wild men that he could not hear. They then made unmistakable signs that they desired something to eat, so host perforce, grandfather went to the cupboard and gave them all the bread there was in the house, and the story is that there were seven loaves. The unwelcome guests then left without giving further trouble.

It was soon found that a mistake had been made in settling where they first did, for the river bottom in early days was damp and malarious; so they felt obliged to look further. This time they ascended a lofty hill north of Cincinnati, eight miles

distant from the Ohio River or foot of Main Street on the Winton Road. There they bought eighty-six and a quarter acres, all deep, primeval forest excepting a tract large enough for a garden, which the Indians had cleared and planted to corn. The first owner, a Mr. Finney, bought it from the government, and the deed came to our grandfather from him.

The first-born of our grandparents was a daughter, Sarah. In grandfather's old Bible, which I have beside me, it says she was born "on Friday, the 4th day of April, 1801," so she was a member of the family when they left the bottom land in 1804. I seem to see them starting forth in the ox-wagon again for their shorter removal to the tableland. Let us follow them as they find their way among stumps, through mudholes, and around fallen trees, keeping near Mill Creek until they turn suddenly north and begin to climb the rugged heights. The way was tedious, with many pauses to "chunk" the wheels and give the oxen a chance to breathe. We think that the mother was busy keeping little "Sallie" safe in her arms, while Grandmother Badgley held on to Robert. This climb of one mile brought them to the top of the hill called "Big Hill," and although it has been graded, worked, and macadamized for more than one hundred years, it is still "the big hill," to this day looked upon as a barrier to easy transportation.

We can but marvel at the amount of energy it must have taken for these ancestors of ours to undertake such exhausting labors in founding a home. We are glad they had the imagination to foresee in the dark, primeval forest that home, surrounded by waving fields of grain and long stretches of green pasture with grazing cattle and sheep. They beheld with their actual vision the maple trees, the beech and oak trees that grew about the refreshing deeps of Deer Lick Spring, but only in their fancy sprang the wide orchards and wafted the perfume of peach blossoms. Yet the dream upheld them in the task that lay ahead, and inspired the very beginning of the undertaking. Their journeyings were at last finished, and they reached the scene of all of earth life that remained to them.

With the vision of home on their own farm before them, the oxen were unyoked in the little clearing and the pioneers began



housekeeping in the wagon. At once the man started into the work of gathering material for the first house. He selected from the forest the trees suitable for the logs, felled them, prepared them to go into the walls, split clapboards and puncheons, and brought stones and clay from the rocky run near by — large, flat stones for the hearth and smaller ones to build into the fireplace. They made by themselves their nest in the forest, from materials gathered there.

In time the little home was ready: the walls of this first house were of round logs, with interstices “chinked” and daubed; the floors of split boards called “puncheons” were laid; eave poles, rib poles, clapboards (shingles), and weight poles with “knees” to hold them in place completed the roof without one single nail, wooden pins being used where fastening was required. The old-fashioned “cat and clay” chimney was ready for its daily smoke. These chimneys were made of sticks laid up something like the cob houses of childhood and thoroughly plastered with clay within and without. They were, of course, built up on the outside of the house wall, and were largest at the base, growing narrower as the top was approached. The fireplace was constructed of stones from the brook.

Grandfather had pounded out the crane and pothooks upon his anvil, and they were hung in place. “Old Star” had been hitched up to haul in the six-foot backlog, which he snaked straight into the room where grandfather could roll it into the great fireplace, to burn for several days. Now the appetizing odor of wild meat fills the cabin — our grandparents are at home in Ohio. We have not heard that any ceremonies attended the hanging of the crane, neither was the house-warming celebrated in any way that has come down to us; but we know they must have been happy to feel settled and at home. It is true that at first but quilts and blankets hung at the door — poor protection from wildcats, panthers, and other forest creatures; but at least the four walls of home were there, and love and hope and faith dwelt within.

Much remained to be done. As soon as he could the pioneer father cut the heavy timber about the cabin, rolled

logs into heaps, and burned the underbrush. Then the roots of those old forest trees had to be grubbed and field and garden made with greatest labor from wild woodland; yet even these days had their pleasures. On the cleared ground great heaps of dried limbs and underbrush were piled high, and when these were burned, what fun for the children! As the drapery of those noble trees was consumed in roaring, dazzling flames, from their embers what matchless roast potatoes and eggs did they extract! In the days of clearing, the air was almost continually laden with smoke. Neighbors banded together at log-rollings, and jolly "bees" did they have, with such contests of strength as not only amused but really told in the field of paying industry. Though the work was at times made sport, it was none the less work; there was no sin accounted greater than laziness in the new country.

An opening was made in the deep, dark wood where for centuries, as far as we know, the trees had stood erect and tall through changing years, budding and producing fruit after their kind, as they did in the Garden of Eden where God first planted them. The leaves fell in the autumn, and the winds swirled them in great heaps, where they enriched the ground; but there was no man to till that good soil. Game was abundant in these remote shades; wild turkeys went in droves and fattened on beechnuts and sweet acorns; opossums also flourished in these surroundings and became "too good to talk about," as the colored individual would declare. A well-fattened raccoon, too, from this hunting ground made a fine roast before the open fire as he was there suspended from a hook, turned with a forked stick, and basted in his own abundant fat, which ran down in streams into the dripping pan. This meat, with potatoes roasted in the ashes, made a dinner for an epicure.

Grandfather enjoyed trapping: when I was a child I remember seeing him set snares for rabbits and traps for quails, just as in the long-ago days of his young manhood. Game did add much to the diet of the pioneers, and without it their bill of fare would indeed have been scanty. At the very first they suffered from lack of flour, but they found a passable substitute

in the bulbous roots of the bear-grass, which they washed and dried and then pounded into powder, making a kind of flour for their bread.

One of the first improvements our grandparents found necessary was the digging of a well, for the delightful waters of Deer Lick Spring were in the woods across a field. Happily they found a vein of clear, cold, limestone water, and in it they swung from a windlass an oaken bucket which, when I saw it, was "the old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket, the moss-covered bucket that hung in the well." The water sprang from a cleft in the rock at the bottom of the well and was ever cold, clear, and unfailing; other wells dried up or ran low, but never "grandfather's well." Grandmother hung a long-handled gourd dipper on the well, and water, they declared, never tasted so good from any other drinking cup, though the next generation decided a bright tin cup was the superior.

After the land was cleared, corn and flax were planted, often among logs not yet removed, and our thrifty ancestors were soon cultivating the garden spot and all the places between the felled trees where they could put in seed. Our great-grandmother, Rachel Badgely, brought apple seeds in a snuff-box over the mountains to plant in the new land. I do not know whether she lived long enough to eat of the fruit, but I do know that her descendants did, and blessed her name for her thoughtfulness. The garden south of that old home was always connected in our minds with the primitive garden of the first parents of all, because of the abundance of fruit trees there; it seemed only to lack the flowing rivers to become an ideal Eden to our child eyes.

As each homestead was to furnish its holders with all they considered necessary, upon every frontier farm were the means of making nearly everything they used there. Our ancestors tanned hides in vats of their own construction, which furnished leather for the family's shoes. The vats were usually placed close under some window, so the owners could prevent wild animals from carrying off the hides. The shoemaker was an itinerant, who came in the fall to make shoes for the family from the leather prepared on the place.



As soon as conditions became more prosperous our grandfather put up a weave-shop down in the orchard; it was a little one-roomed frame house containing both loom and spinning wheels; there were the little flax-wheels and the larger ones for spinning woolen yarn, and reels for winding thread or yarn from the spindles. There, too, were swifts for warping or preparing the thread for the loom with shuttles, bobbins, and all the paraphernalia of the home wool and linen factory. I recall the little weave-shop down among the trees in grandfather's orchard, where our mother wove a piece of flannel one summer. It used to seem all too lonesome at the house when mother was weaving, so we children spent hours at the weave-shop watching her shuttle fly through the warp and hearing the treadle come down with a bang.

In the old days, when the cloth was woven along came the itinerant tailor to measure the men-folk and cut out vests, coats and pantaloons for them. They were busy women, those grandmothers of ours — as an instance of their industry, they made every bit of thread used in the ordinary sewing, from pulling the flax up by the roots to spinning it into thread. In every well-ordered family they knew the art of flax breaking. After being pulled it was laid out to rot the pulp from the fibers; next it was "hetcheled" or hatched to dress the flax into separate fibers; then these were spun from the distaff on a little wheel. The spinner sat with her foot upon a treadle while her two hands were busy with the distaff and wheel, and while thus employed her happy, hopeful heart would oft be tuned to sweetest melody, and above the spinning wheel there rose the glad strain of cheerful song:

Bright angels, strike your loudest strings,  
Your sweetest voices raise,  
Let Heaven and all created things  
Sound our Immanuel's praise.

Remember, O you daughters of Rachel Watkins, that sewing machines were a luxury unknown in the early days of the nineteenth century. All the fine backstitching and hemming were done by hand; all the hosiery came from the same industrious fingers, that seemed never idle for a moment. Our

grandmothers knitted as they rode to market or to and from the neighbors' houses; it is even told of one industrious woman that she carried her knitting to her father's funeral in order not to be idle on the way.

Grandfather's blacksmith forge was set up near the cabin, and until late in life he had plenty to do, dividing his time between clearing his land or farming it and plying his trade. They did not live always in the first little cabin, but soon built a hewn log house of larger proportions; nor did their family remain so small. In their first little home on the farm was born their elder son, Joseph, on Saturday, October 26, 1805. In the larger hewn log house their third child, Benjamin Utter, was born on September 14, 1811.

The years passed until grandmother's eldest-born, William Utter, who had been left behind in New Jersey, should have attained his majority. She began to watch for his arrival, and through the waiting years it became a habit of hers to stand on the porch and look down the Winton Road to see if her boy were coming. When she saw a young man well mounted approaching, she thought, "It is William;" but each passed on. One day she heard that a new family had come from "Jersey" and had settled three miles north of them, so they went over for news from their "far country." With what painful eagerness the mother must have awaited the knowledge of her son's delay! There was still no mail service over the mountains, and grandmother could only hope for some word of mouth brought by emigrants from New Jersey.

It was but sad news that greeted her, for the new-comers told her that William had died at the age of twenty — only one year before he was to have come to her. She not only missed seeing him grow into young manhood, but it was not even hers to know those details of his development which mothers so treasure; for her it was to be as though death had claimed him when they had first parted in New Jersey long before. Never again did she watch for the well-mounted young man riding down the Winton Road, nor on seeing such a horseman did she call the little brothers from their play to watch the approach of William.

At last, in the evolution of the years, our grandparents built their third home upon the farm. This time it was a long frame house with an old-fashioned "stoop" or porch in front. In one corner of this porch was a storeroom, which was called by our family, at least, the "meal room." A great many cast-off accumulations were kept here in case of possible need, though it was primarily for the barrels of flour and meal for the use of the family and shorts and other feed for the stock.

The house consisted of two very large rooms with only an attic above. The front room was the best room and had a good plastered wall. It was well furnished for those days. There stood the large Franklin stove, open and with andirons. The mountings of this valued piece of furniture were brass, and we may be sure grandmother kept them bright and shining from much polishing with "rotten stone" (pumice), and that she thought her stove a thing of beauty. At the left of this open fire was a clothes-press where they kept their Sunday clothes, and at the right was a large cupboard where the best china was placed. I remember the flowered plates arranged in handsome rows upon those shelves: there was the kind with the highly conventionalized roses as a border, brick colored but entirely satisfactory to our eyes; there, too, was the old willow pattern. Flaring teacups with handles, sugar bowls and teapots of the regular old-fashioned dark blue flowing into white — they were there in grandmother's cupboard, and probably all brought from the home far away in New Jersey. How home-like it was! The high bedstead with carved head and foot board stood substantially in its place, deep with feathers, erect as to bolster and pillows, well covered with a hand-woven counterpane; the round table where they kept the old family Bible; the little stand where the brass candlesticks stood and the small work-basket with its odd cushion, its iron thimble and beeswax, its coarse white thread in the hank — though it must also have contained fine thread and needles, for our grandmother's sewing was the marvel of the neighbors: the finest mending and hemming, the finest hand-made buttons, were to be found in the old walnut chest that came with grandfather to our house.

Cooking stoves were then but little used. In the immense kitchen of grandfather's frame house the heavy kettles hung over the fire from a crane, where meat and vegetables were boiled. The baking was done in Dutch ovens. These were large, flat-bottomed kettles set up on three legs and covered with a thick iron lid. The oven was placed on the hearth and hot, bright coals drawn out beneath it; more coals were placed on top the lid, and renewed when necessary until the corn or wheat bread or the pie was baked. I do not know whether our grandparents had a brick oven or not, but I do know that all the larger families about did.

How cheerful the bright, clean hearth with its singing tea-kettle; how good the odors of savory meat and wholesome bread arising from the crane and Dutch oven; how clean and white the coarse, homespun linen on the "fall-leaf table;" how pretty the blue-and-white plates; how dark and rich the preserves and golden the custard pudding! This was the tea table in the kitchen when company had come to spend the evening. Let us peep into the next room, where the host and hostess are entertaining: the fire has been made up, the hearth is swept, bright red apples are warming there, and a large mug of cider is being passed around, while matrons in caps are plying their swift knitting-needles and chatting merrily of such subjects as their flax and wool — how many hanks they have spun this fall or how much cloth they have woven. There is no conversation concerning "bargains" in linen and cloth, though there is some mention of the pretty chintz dresses folded away in chests, almost as expensive as silken gowns. The men, then as now, have other things to talk about — how many hogs they will kill; how much land has been cleared on their respective places; how the young orchards are doing; whether the wolves have been after the sheep or the deer made havoc with their turnips; perhaps they have even seen bear tracks about the barn.

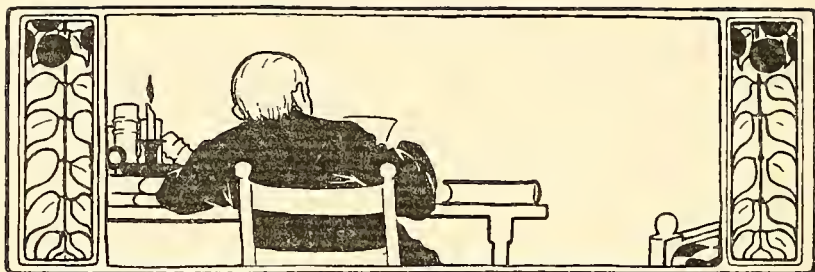
Then as the fire begins to fade and the shadows to deepen in remote corners, they tell the tales of olden times — tales of witches, of wonder-inspiring comets foretelling famine, pestilence, and war; tales of murder, of buried treasure, of haunted

houses and lonely hollows in deep and dark ravines where in midnight hours has been seen even a headless ghost, supposed to be the spirit of a murdered woman — until the blood chills in their veins and the children are afraid of their shadows. They also told stories of the Revolutionary War — how a great serpent appeared in the sky and broke up to form there the word “War” and another, the word “God;” of the earthquake which was so severe as to cause the big kettle over the fire to sway back and forth until the water spilled over the sides; of spots on the sun, when there was frost every month in the year, crops failed, and there was almost a famine. There was no daily paper in those days to publish the latest sensation, but our forefathers handed down many a legend and many dramatic portions of history; and the tales they wove of the supernatural were sufficiently thrilling to keep fancy awake and furnish topics of conversation about as wholesome as some of to-day.

Of the frontier matrons who met in her best room, I dare say our grandmother was as handsome as any there. Her luxuriant and very white hair was bound across the front with a broad, black ribbon, and this contrasting band with the wide, white frill of her well-made cap set off most beautifully her snow-white hair and coal-black eyes. We would linger in this company; but the shadows deepen, it is late, the candles are snuffed out and the coals are covered — the first homes of Ohio are asleep in their rich clearings.







## CHAPTER III

### CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH OF B. U. WATKINS



THE years came and went, and brought out of meager beginnings many improvements. Damask roses clung to the pillars of the porch of the frame house and filled the air with fragrance. A large garden with a southern slope was enclosed by a fence of palings which grandfather had split from hickory logs. Along this fence they planted cherry trees — what a high beautiful hedge they made! By the gate sweet daffodils and narcissus bent their perfumed heads and artichokes grew. Tall sunflowers flaunted their heavy crowns of gold within that garden fence, and there bowered the wonderful Mayduke cherry tree, changing with the season from fragrant bloom to delicious, juicy fruit. Some of the visions which had brightened our grandparents' first hard and barren days had come true; it is good to think that their labor was not in vain, and that for them the wilderness did truly blossom as the rose. Wheat-fields waved before the June breezes; dark, rank corn filled the lowlands with a prospect delightful to see; the orchard trees were heavy with fruit. A certain apple tree, it may have been one of Great-grandmother Badgley's seedlings, bore sixty bushels of apples one summer, and was thenceforth known as the "sixty-bushel tree."

Inside the garden palings grandfather built drying kilns,

with sheds to shelter them; for the peach trees bore a wealth of fruit, and canning such as we do nowadays was then unknown. There upon the kiln great quantities of peaches and apples were spread to dry, and all through the season of fruit the air was fragrant with the rich perfume of drying peaches. The kilns were made of brick or stone laid in mortar, and were arched and daubed with clay. When completed they were thoroughly heated from below and then allowed to cool down to the proper temperature for the fruit, which was placed on the top of the kiln. What the remaining heat did not do the wind and the sun did, and this was called kiln-dried fruit. Currants, raspberries, and other small fruits were preserved, and placed in old sugar-bowls and cracked pitchers and set on the high shelf.

How industrious our ancestors were! I think of our grandfather toiling away in that woodland, not only clearing the land but splitting oak and hickory rails to fence in the whole eighty-six acres. Within the home the busy mother was cook, spinner, weaver, knitter, seamstress. True, our grandmother liked to make money, and as she was a very rapid knitter she used to "snap away at her needles" and order her children about to keep the household machinery running. By having them do all possible, she was able to earn considerable by knitting for market. She did her best work, however, as a seamstress. I had some beautiful samples of her needlework after I was grown. I remember she made the linen shirt in which our grandfather was buried, and the buttons she had made by hand were in the finest, most artistic stitches.

The three children of James and Rachel Watkins differed both in appearance and temperament. Sarah was tall and straight and slender, sunny and lovable of disposition, merry and fond of a joke. Joseph also grew tall, but muscular and large boned, and strong and rugged of nature as well. Benjamin, with whose story we have the most to do, was shorter and fleshier, fond of study and learned thought, and was also of a poetical turn of mind. Joseph could swing an axe with force and accuracy; Benjamin could with equal dexterity conjugate a Greek verb. Through all the years the brothers called the

first-born of their parents "Sister Sallie." There is a story I recall of her infancy. One of the neighbors had told grandfather that the child might inherit his deafness, and this so troubled him he determined to test the babe's hearing for himself. He took her outdoors and placed her near a flat stone, upon which he hammered, and the sound startled little Sarah so that she cried out. Satisfied from her expression that she heard him, and wild with joy, he snatched her up and bore her in triumph to the house.

Joseph early gave promise of becoming the upright, honest man he was to the end. His name stood for industry and unselfishness. He so early developed frugality that while still young he had a start in the world, a house and lot in Cincinnati and a sawmill near. He grew tall and strong, and his endurance was a marvel. In him were the seeds of truest nobility, and these grew into deeds we must ever remember. Our father, Benjamin Watkins, also showed in childhood signs of the man to be; a great mind and heart were promised, and though he had a blend of the lion in his nature, he had a better side, a tender and kindly nature which, with the family trait of honesty, made him a true and obedient son.

The blossoming wilderness, the peace and growing prosperity, the good and bright little children, all tended to make even arduous toil seem light, and the way before stretched out full of hope; but unexpected shadows were gathering there. When the three children were still small, they began to lose the precious sense of sight. First, cataract appeared upon the eyes of the two older ones; and when Joseph was nine years old he became quite blind. For two years our grandparents waited for an oculist to come over those separating mountains, to know if it were possible for the sight of their children to be restored. Ah, those were weary, waiting days, like unto the waiting for grandmother's son William! At last an oculist did come from the East, and although the skill of that period was not as to-day, Joseph's sight was restored by the good physician, Dr. John Martin. We do not know exactly about the state of Aunt Sallie's eyes at this time; her blindness may have developed later, or the cataract on her eyes may have been



more difficult of removal than that of Uncle Joseph, for she lost almost her entire sight, and could just discern light when in daytime a door or window was open. She walked in twilight the rest of her days.

I have said but little of Robert Utter, perhaps for the very reason that he was quiet in his ways and good without making a stir. He was destined to be a farmer and a good man, as he was a boy. Our brother William wrote, on the occasion of his son William Utter's golden wedding, that in early manhood he became disgusted with pioneer life and started to return to New Jersey. At Chillicothe, however, he joined General Duncan McArthur's army, and after varied experiences in Indian warfare was paroled and returned to Cincinnati. In 1814 he married Sarah Van Winkle, also of Dutch extraction, and they went to housekeeping in a log cabin, the site of which is still marked in the vicinity of Spring Grove. Here his son, William Van Winkle Utter, was born on January 3, 1815.

While yet a child, our father had his share in the work of the home place. "Going for the cows" was one. He had to start about the middle of the afternoon to gather in all the wanderers by milking time, as it grew dark so early in the wood where they foraged for pasture. Other chores of his were pulling flax and milking. One day as he was watering the horses at the big spring down in the woods, he looked across the ravine to the opposite bank, where, in a fine grove, he thought he saw a company gathering as for a camp-meeting. Crossing over, the vision vanished; and as these hallucinations became frequent it was found that he, too, the youngest, was going blind; and so it was that at the age of six years he lost his sight from cataract. This was some years after Uncle Joseph's operation, and we do not know all the conditions of that gloomy time, excepting that for four years in the best time to acquire the fundamentals of an education our dear father was led by the hand. His hungry young mind expanded even in the darkness, but they were sad years for childhood. When an operation could be performed upon his eyes, he entirely lost the sight of one from inflammation, and had but one fourth normal vision in the other. Thus handicapped, our father

began his noble life. Just here I will state that this affliction is not known to have occurred before in the families of our ancestors, nor has it appeared in any of the generations since.

Waiting times were not over for the younger son. Now they watched for some one to bring into the new country proper magnifying lenses and adjust them to fit the poor eyes. At last this other eagerly expected one came and spectacles were obtained. During the interval of waiting an intense desire for an education took possession of the blind boy. The lenses had come — perhaps now the longed-for knowledge of books would be his! The first efforts to use the spectacles furnished were attended with great difficulty. In the beginning two pairs of glasses were used, but the clumsy makeshift was soon abandoned for one more practical — a watchmaker's magnifying glass with tenfold magnifying power. With the last device new joy and hope filled his heart and aspiration for knowledge and scholarship sprang up anew in his mind. With this little glass in a bone tube pressed close to the eye having still a fraction of sight, and seeing but one word at a time, he began to study English grammar and the very few books at hand.

To be sure, the "deestricht school" had reached southern Ohio at last; but how shall I make eyes of to-day see it? It was a log schoolhouse, with a large fireplace in one end and for benches a lot of rude slab seats. Instead of glass window panes they substituted greased paper. At a desk of rude construction sat the schoolmaster, with a bundle of switches within easy reach and oftentimes a huge cudgel in his hand. To gain order he brought this weapon down upon his stout desk with a sound that struck terror into small craniums. In this school our father received the one thrashing of his life. On the door a card was suspended by a cord, on one side of which was written the letter "I," and on the other "O." When a child was excused from the room he was to turn the letter "O" out, and on returning, to indicate that he was in, he displayed the letter "I." A mischievous boy, in order to play a joke on "Ben" once, when our father was out, turned the card back to "I," and when he came again into the room he was called to account by the master, accused of dishonesty, and immedi-

ately given a sound thrashing, which hurt in every way the sensitive child. He went home very much crestfallen, and in a short time became ill with high fever and delirium. In bathing her sick boy grandmother was greatly shocked to find his back and limbs covered with black and blue marks, which called for explanations and elicited a recital of his punishment. I remember even now how indignant I was as a child when father told the story of his solitary thrashing.

It did not take our father long to outgrow the old master with his scant knowledge and his system of pedagogy, which embraced "lickin' and larnin'," the former almost in excess of the latter. Books of all kinds were scarce in those days. I remember one of father's early books, "Joseph Good," whose hero would not play ball in David Plowman's field on the Sabbath day; also a "poem" concerning

Honest John Thompkins, the hedger and ditcher,  
Who although he was poor did not wish to be richer,  
For all these vain wishes by him were prevented  
By a fortunate habit of being contented.

Thus Honest John, though his station was humble,  
Passed through this sad world without even a grumble.  
I wish all, who were poorer or richer,  
Would copy John Thompkins, the hedger and ditcher.

These specimens of crude literature forecast little for our father's use of English or for that higher education he so greatly craved.

In vacation the Wise Young Man from the East walked out into the country and taught a subscription school in the neighborhood, and he it was who directed our father in special courses of study. He used to remain after school hours to recite to his teacher, and his difficulty of sight and diligence in the pursuit of learning so impressed one of the girls who was a schoolmate of his that more than fifty years later she told her grandson of the boy who had had but the eighth of his eyesight and yet had become a scholar. This so impressed the lad that he, through his own exertions, made of himself an educated leader of men and is so recognized to-day.

During these early struggles for an education, a relative in

New York, hearing of the misfortune of the Watkins children and the desire of the younger son for knowledge, sent a box of school-books which had belonged to an only son who had died while prosecuting his studies. Among these books were the long-desired classics, and our father's aspiration was the keener now that these were in his hands at last; but who would be his teacher in the wilderness? He, too, would have to come, like the wise men of olden time, "from the East!" It was indeed a wonderful providence that, with the jeweler's magnifying lens and the box of school-books, came shortly the young teacher before mentioned who taught the subscription school. It took the greatest persistence and patience to master the fundamentals of Latin and Greek by moving over the page a magnifying glass which often covered not even one entire word of the text. In this exertion our father persevered in his boyhood.

Long years after, he wrote a granddaughter at the beginning of her language course: "*Viri Romæ* was the second book in my Latin course; the first was *Historia Sacra*. I read these through every word; then Cæsar. I read the whole of the Gallic War and one book of the *De Bello Civili*; then all of Virgil and about half the orations of Cicero. These were my school-books, though I read them mostly at home. Harkness' first lessons in Greek are much better than anything I had to begin with." From this one list we know that our father pursued his studies untiringly, which delighted his new preceptor, who saw in him a coming linguist. His fine memory, his power to retain as well as to select the best, possessed him of a wide range of knowledge. He delighted in both ancient and modern history, though all his life Greek was his favorite study; for he not only enjoyed the study of language, but this one helped him in his devoted researches in the Bible. If it had not been for the Bible and the English Reader there would have been no real literature in the ordinary home of that period. The library of many a frontier household consisted in the almanacs, which were preserved from year to year, being sewed together and hung on a nail under the mantelpiece.

Perhaps I should have stated that among the treasures in

the box sent from New York was a silver watch, which father carried till past middle age. We doubt not that it was through his teacher he was introduced to Woodward High School, one of the first schools for classic learning in Cincinnati. In this institution began his life as a regular student. He boarded where the fare was both poor and scant, but nothing was accounted too hard that led to the place he wished to be. The environments were such as introduced him to the early educators; the mathematician, Joseph Ray, became his lifelong friend; also D. S. Burnett, scholar, educator, and a preacher of the Christian Church, a man of superior culture who had a young ladies' seminary not far from Mt. Healthy, known as Hygeia. John A. Gano, a man of note, as well as other leaders whom he met at Woodward High School or through its influence, helped to broaden his ideas of the world of books and of true culture.

Thus our father pursued his studies with interest and enthusiasm, while all this time our grandparents thought how strange it was that Ben wanted to study Latin and Greek and read history and poetry, which to them seemed to have no practical bearing on life or to be of any real value. The fences had to be built, and many were the rails to be split to make these barriers against the neighbors' stock; flax had to be hatched and a thousand and one things done to help make the new home a place of comfort. They had serious fears that higher education tended to produce undutiful sons, who would forsake their old parents. We feel that our father deserves something more than ordinary commendation for the persistence he showed in the pursuit of knowledge, handicapped as he was not only by the spirit of his time but by his blindness. The former was probably harder to bear than the latter; but we must remember that the immediate forbears of the people of his generation were the men and women who had subdued the forest by main strength and had found every moment of their waking hours filled with exhausting labors. There was little time to read, and it was thought quite unnecessary for the mothers of the pioneers to learn to write, for what time had a woman for scribbling nonsense? She might



read a little, so that the Bible would be open to her; but writing was no necessity.

Our grandparents thought the "three R's" the climax of knowledge, and further education, such as a knowledge of foreign tongues, dead languages, and advanced mathematics, the height of folly. Because of this attitude, which was quite in accordance with the opinion of the neighborhood, our grandparents refused their aid to the education our father so deeply desired. This opposition grieved his sensitive spirit; and yet he was never one to hold bitterness long in his heart, and he became the shield of his parents in their age. Since his efforts to obtain a classical education were a success, and the discouragement and lack of aid did not frustrate his aspirations, he could let all pass and consider the difference in the times upon which he came upon the scene.

We must remember also that all within and without his home were not against his fond wishes; in the time of his longing for opportunities to obtain a higher education, his elder brother came forward and stood in the stead of a father. He knew his younger and more afflicted brother desired knowledge above all things, and when the time came he was ready to help him. One day the professor told father he would need a new book for his advanced work. The announcement came almost as a shock, for he knew not how he could obtain a new book. As his parents so disapproved of his literary career, it would be useless to ask them for money for more books; then it was that his brother stepped in, telling him that he was in need of some extra help on the farm that day and would hire him to perform the task. In this way he obtained the money to buy the needed book. When he met the professor he displayed with pride his new purchase. "Well," asked the professor, "how did you come by that?" In reply our father held up his bruised and blistered hands, while his countenance beamed with delight. An earnest soul will soon be known; even in a backwoods country there is always some one to speak his praise, so it was that he drew to himself friends who loved learning. Though I have spoken in general terms concerning the spirit of the neighborhood in regard to education, I must

not fail to mention that our neighbor, "Uncle Jimmie" McCash, had also a mind that reached out to know. He saw that our father, though so hampered, was trying in earnest to mount to greater heights of knowledge, and we heard in later years of many words of encouragement received by him from "Uncle Jimmie," and we know that they heartened him greatly.

Leaving our father still a young student striving for an education, I must tell something of the religious excitement which was stirring the wilderness, for it came to have a great influence on his future life. Early in the nineteenth century a great religious awakening occurred, known as the Cane Ridge revival. It began among the Presbyterians in a small log church in Kentucky, while they were having a camp meeting. This meeting was attended with uncommon demonstrations, such as swooning, jerking, singing, and dancing. Those who swooned would lie for hours in an apparently breathless state and quite unconscious. On recovering they would declare that the Lord had spoken peace to their souls. Those who had "jerks" would sway back and forth with such rapidity that their features were scarcely recognizable. Those who sang did not move their lips, but sang within their chests in what was described as a most heavenly manner, producing a deep and solemn influence.

At such a camp meeting as Cane Ridge there would be between twenty and thirty thousand people who had come from far and near. They would remain in attendance till provisions were exhausted in the quantity demanded to maintain such a host. After this great revival there appeared a Presbyterian minister, eminent as a scholar as well as a preacher and teacher, Barton W. Stone. After witnessing the fruits of the Cane Ridge revival he was led to believe, although he could not explain the demonstrations he had witnessed, that the outcome of these remarkable meetings had helped to break up the apathy into which the country had fallen religiously. He began to study the Bible as for himself alone and came to the rational conclusion that it was the word of God and "an all-sufficient rule of faith and practice." This

amounted to a declaration of war on creeds and man-made confessions of faith which was destined to increase and grow and propagate a simple faith in the Word of God. With the immortal Chillingsworth he declared himself the advocate of "the Bible alone, the religion of Protestants."

It was an actual crisis in our father's life when he met in Cincinnati this learned and deeply pious man. He was greatly enthused by his scholarly advocacy of "the Bible alone," and was persuaded to give the doctrine the ardor of a religious nature of intense activity. The plea for a return to the primitive simplicity of the Gospel touched him with a force which increased rather than abated through his long life; and I could not picture our father naturally, correctly nor as he would be remembered by his descendants, without telling of this epoch in his life and its influence on his future. It was at this time that he turned to the critical study of the New Testament in the original Greek, becoming an authority among the people with whom he associated on the text in that language. People were very religious in that day, and had time to read the Bible in the evening by the little gleam of their candles. There was no pile of newspapers and magazines on the round table where our grandmother kept the brass candlestick, her work-basket and the old family Bible; they read and reread their Book. Our foreparents tried to understand it in the light of the accepted theology of the times, which was somewhat hard to do. Our grandmother was a Presbyterian, and grandfather, though an earnest believer in the Bible, was not a member of any church at the time "the Stone reformation" struck Cincinnati.

The whole family joined this religious movement and with great earnestness followed the light they had. In the little one-horse "Jersey wagon," with its green box and bright red running gears, they drove to church. There they would find the itinerant preacher, "Uncle Sammy" Rogers, John O'Kane, and others. Lorenzo Dow was one of the most famous of these. He was a man of strong conviction, and in his own style fought many a fierce conflict with the powers of sin and unbelief. As he passed through the country, the hungry



people who had not heard a sermon for years would flock by hundreds to his call. He is described as mounted on horseback; in the storms of winter he wore a greatcoat, and green baize leggings were tied just below his knee with colored cotton tapes; his buffalo overshoes were lined by turning the hairy side of the hide inward — heavy and cumbersome they were, but warm and a great protection in the absence of yet undiscovered rubber. Many anecdotes are related of Lorenzo Dow. It was an age of controversy and clashing of creeds, and this itinerant had some modern ideas of pedagogy in regard to object lessons. Once at a camp-meeting he wished to refute the doctrine of "once in grace, always in grace," so on a sudden he sprang from the stand and caught hold upon an extending limb, shouting, "Hold on, Lorenzo! Hold on, Lorenzo, for if you don't you'll fall!" Slipping from the limb he mounted his horse and disappeared into the woods, leaving the audience to cogitate upon this lesson till he returned on some other occasion.

Father had an abundant store of anecdotes, enough to make at least a small volume, and this is one of his concerning Lorenzo Dow: He was one day riding on horseback through a new clearing, when he discovered a man chopping. The woodsman, seeing it was a preacher, slipped from his log and hid. Lorenzo rode up and dismounted, and taking his stand upon the log which had just been felled he preached a sermon, and in conclusion made the announcement: "Just one year from to-day, no preventing Providence, I shall be on this ground and will preach." At the time appointed he came riding up to the clearing, and found a great crowd to hear his sermon. His wilderness advertising was a success.

Among the early itinerants was a famous Methodist circuit rider, Peter Cartwright, a bold, indefatigable leader of the pioneers, a man who understood the signs of the times, who made war on sin and was willing to "maul grace into their unbelieving souls" if that were necessary. I remember one of our father's anecdotes of him: He had been preaching in the wilderness concerning cross-bearing, and shortly afterward, when riding through the brush, he noticed a strange

object ahead in the road. He made haste to discover what it might be, when on coming nearer he recognized an old German whom he had seen in his audience, and here he found him carrying on his back his wife, a noted scold. Peter Cartwright inquired the reason of this unusual performance, when the old man explained: "You told us in your sermon we must take up our cross, and she is my greatest one!"

Peter Cartwright was a born leader of the backwoods people, and no man was more quoted among the simple-hearted settlers than he. He was prompt in action, and once, when passing a cabin where a man and his wife were having a quarrel, he dismounted and went in, and demanded silence; nor did he leave the house until they had not only stopped fighting, but were soundly converted, and with singing and praise had made the woods echo.

Barton W. Stone was an educated man, and so was that other Presbyterian divine, Alexander Campbell, who accepted the no-creed doctrine with the addition of "the union of all Christians." Our people liked this addition, believing it a step in advance, and they accepted the teaching as supported by the prayer of Christ Himself, "that they all may be one." The "Stone Reformation" was also called the "Old Christian Order" and "Bible Christians," but eventually they all came under the name Christian, the adherents of both the Stone and Campbell reformations. Barton W. Stone himself declined to preach for a congregation that refused to unite with the branch calling themselves simply Christians. As a very young man, so interested did our father become in Bible study and religion that before he was aware, when but seventeen, the people were calling him "preacher."

### WHAT MY MOTHER SAID

*With Her Father's Spectacles in Her Hand*

If I could write with this pen of mine,  
This pen so lifeless and hard,  
That which my soul sees through mists of years  
And with first time glows bright starred;

If I could write what my heart calls up  
When I see these crystal rounds,  
And this ancient metal of little price  
Which the two old lenses bounds;

If I could write what my mind would frame  
Of the story that shines on the glass,  
I would paint a boy with rosy face  
And eyes like the sky where clouds pass.  
Ah, I would write of those great blue eyes  
And the hungry soul behind;  
Of the reaching out and the longing to know;  
Of the shut-in, rare young mind!

The pages were there, the page of the Book,  
And of masters old and wise;  
But a film grew over the youthful sight  
And a veil lay on his eyes.  
The longing grew with the growing brain —  
Oh, for a mind well fed!  
Oh, for a way for the soul to fly,  
To know what the great have said!

The silence was deep, for the things desired  
Of masters there were none,  
And only a little light came down  
For the blinded boy in the sun.  
He thanked his God for the little light,  
But books were closed so fast,  
Until these two little rounds were his —  
*A key in his hands at last!*

Can we with keen sight and books piled high,  
Can we know the rapture that shined  
In those windows of blue when the letters appeared  
On the page for the eyes that were blind?  
Is there wonder I seem on these glasses to see  
Old Homer's verse unrolled,  
And of poets who sang for the boy who was blind,  
With a music no night controlled?

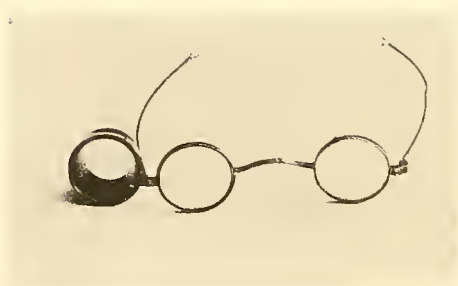
That tongues of Athens and of Rome  
In stately measures pass,  
Enclosed within these metal frames  
Upon their discs of glass?

I clasp them in my hands grown old,  
They tell a tale to me;  
I see that scholar and man of books  
And the great mind through these made free.

They are laid aside, for Heaven's light  
He can bear in his home above,  
He sees all clear that he longed to see  
In the Realm of Eternal Love.  
But I cherish these tiny windows of glass  
Through which his pages cleared,  
Which gave to my father the food he craved  
When the words of books appeared.

And so, is it strange I sit with my eyes  
On visions which long ago fell,  
And that thoughts they waken within my brain  
My lips nor my pen cannot tell?

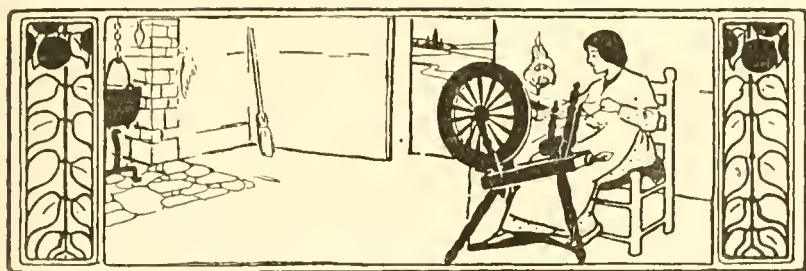
—*Adelaide Gail Frost.*





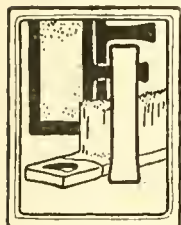


Sophronia Keeler Watkins



## CHAPTER IV

### OUR MOTHER, SOPHRONIA KEELER WATKINS



It was August 17, 1804, that a daughter was born to David and Abigail Skeels Keeler in Essex County, New York, near Lake Champlain. She was named Sophronia and was the first-born daughter of her parents. Older than she was her brother William, born in 1800, while after her came Jesse and Hernando Cortez and last a sister, Julia Ann.

It is hard to realize that her birthplace was a log cabin set in the stony fields of a wild and rugged country. When three of her children visited the scene years afterward, the two-roomed cabins had given place to palatial residences in a thickly settled, well-cultivated country. These little pioneer cabins, having one room below and one above, with communication by ladder, had evolved into houses of brick or stone with spacious and beautiful rooms adorned with works of art; broad stairways displaced ladders, and treasures from the far corners of the earth made elegance undreamed of in 1804. Greater than the lack of luxury was the absence of what we now consider necessities. Schools were rare; a three months' subscription school was thought to be quite sufficient to teach the children to read and write and give them some knowledge of "figures." Books were seldom found in the homes of the poor; the Bible was the one book in houses of poverty. The little



children learned the alphabet from the old Family Bible, and it was their reader at school. Had the Book been excluded from the public schools of those days, sad indeed would have been the condition of the majority. To our mothers it was history, biography, poetry. They read it while they spun at the flax-wheel, while they rocked the cradle. It explained that other Book, the Book of Nature; it made our ancestors what they were — honest, God-fearing people. Were I to take from our mother's life her faith in the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures and ignore the influence it exerted upon her whole way, I should be no true historian. She read it in childhood as a school-book; in later years it was to her a treasury of all knowledge. How she delighted to trace through its prophetic books the coming Christ! The approaching footsteps of the Divine thrilled her in their onward march through the Old Testament. All the great events recorded in her Book became so familiar that she used to spend the long evenings when father was away from home telling us of Daniel in the lions' den, of the Hebrew children, of David and Goliath, and many another of those immortal stories.

Our mother developed into an active, obedient child, fond of play and ever eager to know. I like to fancy my Grandmother Keeler — tall, large and fine-looking as she was — when her busy day was over, sitting down with the large Family Bible open in her lap and her knitting-needles in her hands. Plump William and little dark-eyed Sophronia and then the younger ones, one by one they were called to recite at mother's knee. First they learned the large capital letters at the beginning of the chapters, pointed out to them by a knitting needle; next came the small letters, and then simple words of one and two syllables, till they could read them off at sight. Indeed those mothers of ours knew various arts, and withal were not poor governesses, starting their children well on the road to knowledge. The Bible being the only textbook of our mother's youth, coupled with her great love for it, made her the best informed person I have yet met in all the great facts of that greatest Book. As I write, my eye is ever looking from the little brown-eyed girl at her mother's knee to



our trundle-bed, where the little brown-eyed mother told us Bible stories with such wonderful detail that we thought she had memorized the text, and I wondered if I should ever be able to tell them as she did. I have never been able to do so, and yet I wish I could make her great-grandchildren know something of her style of story-telling, for it was a striking gift of this dear ancestor of ours; and so I am of the mind to try.

Imagine us in the trundle-bed and our mother sitting at the quilting-frames with a candle, or more often two, throwing a soft yellow light upon the smooth, dark head bent above her careful needle. Her word-painting, even more plainly than the picture in the old Bible, made us see, as she related the story of Daniel and the lions, the rocky, barren den, the bones remaining from past feasts, the gaping savage beasts, the helpless Daniel in their midst. We knew the great climax was coming; soon our mother would slightly raise her voice to repeat with what to us was thrilling oratory, and which I remember to this day as a grand piece of declamation: "*My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they may not hurt me; forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.*"

From her conversation in after years we know that she had, as she said, "a thirst for knowledge" in those days of scant opportunity; and that she used every possible advantage which came to her we also know. Her share of only three months in school gave her a few fundamentals, and upon these and the teaching at her mother's knee she built an education, with the aid of her bright young mind and hunger for knowledge. The teachers of these three-months schools solicited their pupils, and were paid the paltry sum of "two bits" per pupil for the three months of instruction. Accuracy and thoroughness were strong characteristics of hers, and she studied the primary branches with such diligence that she became a clear penman, a good and correct reader, quick in mental arithmetic, and especially fine in geography and spelling; she was known to the latest day of her life as an accurate speller. She was so fond of history that as soon as conditions changed in her life and books had their part she read and studied

history. Her love of learning fitted her for a teacher when she became a young woman, though she had had so little of training in the schoolroom. I do not know how long our mother taught, but she was a schoolmistress for a time.

Our Keeler grandparents lived on a small farm and their children were trained from earliest childhood to work. Their first labor was to gather the small boulders from their stony field and place them in beds six feet long or pile them in mounds where they remain to this day. The girls were early taught to spin flax, as the cloth of their time was mostly woven from flax or wool. Our mother knew the whole process of making linen from the sowing of the flax in the early spring till the hatched fibers, looking like a mat of iron gray hair, were placed upon the distaff to spin into thread for the loom. The next step, weaving, was an art she well understood. In the forest our mothers dug roots and gathered bark to make dye stuffs with which to color their dress and apron materials. They took great delight in having pretty stripes and checks of their own designing. Sheets, table linen and towels were spread out to bleach as soon as taken from the loom. Some women were experts in weaving fine table linen and made handsome plaids and figures of artistic design.

Wool was picked, oiled, carded and spun by our mother and grandmother and then woven into blankets or flannel. The finer flannel was for dress materials while the coarser was sent off to the fuller to be fulled for men's wear. Coverlids of handsome design were made. I remember a quilt which had belonged to a great aunt of our mother and which was perhaps a hundred years old. It was made from wool; the center was dark blue, the border which was about six inches wide was madder red. It was stuffed with black sheep's wool and had very fine quilting on it. The center was in diamond and the border was of beautiful feather-vine work — very fine, neat quilting.

Our maternal grandmother, Abigail Skeels Keeler, cooked, as did Grandmother Rachel Watkins, in kettles hung from the crane over the open fireplace. Some of the exquisite housekeepers of those days kept pothooks scoured bright and clean with sand and then wrapped in cloth and laid away to do duty

when company was expected. It is true that the demands of society, large houses and the multiplicity of cares they entail, burden many women of to-day so that life appears far too complex; but when we think that those little homes of our mothers were small factories in addition to the usual household duties, their lives do not seem so simple as the first fleeting glance might indicate.

Self-reliance was a part of their education, and it has been told of our mother that her father never bought her a pair of shoes after she was seven years old. That was a sad year, 1817, when there was frost in every month, and the poor new Englanders suffered for food. Our grandparents were no exception, and their children often went to bed hungry. I wish now that mother had given us more particulars of those days, but she was one who made it a point to say but little upon subjects which were painful. I know that all crops and vegetation were destroyed, and that the family subsisted mainly upon milk from a cow that wandered farther up in the mountains where there was still grazing, and that their only fruit was huckleberries, which they ate with their milk. Once Grandfather Keeler went away from home to work and got a half-bushel of corn and carried it on his shoulder many miles to mill, perhaps thirty, and when it was ground he came home with some real food for the family.

Our mother became an expert spinner, and her swiftness gained much for her. Once because of her record as a spinner she was called to Vermont to spin. Even her childhood was full of labor, we see, and we know that what she learned to do she did well and thoroughly. Despite her busy childhood and girlhood the little mother found some time for recreation. The playground of the Keeler children was in the shadow of the beautiful Adirondacks on the shores of Lake Champlain and amongst the ruins of Forts Ticonderoga and Crown Point. They saw the place that Lord Howe fell and understood the picture:

From the giant, tangled dark woods,  
In the Trout Brook at the ambush,  
Wet with mists of roaring cascades,  
Floateth up his strong, white spirit.

Our mother used to tell us of the bright bits of stained glass and broken china she found about the fort, and the descriptions of her playground so impressed me that I recalled what she had said, and when Brother Joseph took Sister Ida and me to Fort Ticonderoga in 1903 we found pieces of glass and china, and in memory of our dear mother's childhood I brought home some little bits with me, which I yet treasure.

What a visit that was, back to the scenes of our mother's girlhood! None more pleasant and none so memorable has been taken by me. The opportunity came as a surprise from our brother Joseph. He loved his mother devotedly and was ever a dutiful son; with the rest of us he had often listened to tales of her youth amongst the picturesque haunts of the Adirondack mountains and the beautiful lakes of the state of New York. When his life's greater work had been accomplished and his fortune was well assured, he took time for travel; and it was while I was living in Hiram, Ohio, that he wrote telling me that he desired to take Ida and me on a trip to Essex County, New York, that we might together go over the scene of our mother's birth and childhood and see the neighborhood where she began the earnest struggle of life in 1804.

Sister Ida was to be called from California, and they were to leave Duluth, Minnesota, on the Lake route, pausing in Cleveland, Ohio, where I was to join them. Mr. Frost took me the short distance from Hiram to Cleveland, and there, about midnight, we saw the fine lake steamer *Tienesta* land. Our relatives were soon discovered among the passengers, for they were looking out for us, and great was our mutual joy on starting out at last together on that long dreamed of pilgrimage, though we missed the eldest of our group of four, the one so fitted to add a large share to the profit of this journey. Brother William had taken that last journey "whence no traveler returns," and there were but the three of us left.

Our first stop was to be at Niagara Falls, and there we arrived in due time, glad to hear the thundering of the waters so famous wherever America is known. Brother Joe found a good hotel near the great abyss — Cliff House — where our

rooms were well situated for observation. The moon shone on the sweep of the river as it swiftly passed on to break its sheen in masses of jeweled foam. I thought of the long years this wonderful transformation had been taking place continuously — deeps of crystal water dashing in a torrent that fell far below in millions of tiny, snow-white bubbles — would the river's pulse ever quiet again on its way to the inland sea? It was with difficulty that I calmed my excited thoughts enough to forget the grandeur without and fall asleep.

When I opened my eyes it was to find the dawning of a lovely, bright day, and as soon as we could get breakfast we started out to view the glistening, foaming cataract from different angles. Sister Ida and I went under the falls in the little steamboat, *Maid of the Mist*, while brother waited to see if we came out alive. It was a strange sensation, and not unpleasant. On our way to Buffalo we were interested in seeing from the train the Whirlpool Rapids. Having reached this city on Lake Erie we took a steamer of the famous Richelieu and Ontario Line and were on our way across to Toronto. We did not stop long in this Canadian city, but sailed on toward the St. Lawrence. We found our steamers well provided with everything to make passengers comfortable, and they were loaded with tourists.

The scenery along the St. Lawrence has often been described, and what I note are just some of the things that linger in our memory: the old-fashioned windmills flapping their wings, though for the most part they were inactive; the fine, well-cultivated estates; the green and gold of summer fields. Every stop our boat made brought a crowd. At one of the landings a small company of Indians came with baskets and trinkets to sell. While we were at dinner one day we passed the Lansing Rapids. I heard the bottom of the boat scraping along the rocks, but felt no alarm until a passenger told me that a steamer just a little in advance of us had been so injured that it had kept up with difficulty until the shore was reached. I soon noticed a great crowd on the pier, and two or three hundred passengers from that boat were taken upon our steamer to continue their interrupted journey. As no lives were lost



by this accident its effect did not remain to dampen the pleasure of our trip.

The voyage was a pleasant one, cool and cloudy most of the time, and so we had a good chance to see without the glare of the sun dazzling our eyes. Great flocks of gulls hovered over our ship, and the young people took pleasure in tossing bread and crackers to see them dive after the food. We were also interested in the porpoises; this animal seemed never to show his head above the water, but turned and tumbled all over himself, now and then disclosing a dash of white like a flag of truce.

We had plenty of time to study the crowd on board and to observe the different ways in which different people enjoy a voyage amid such scenes. The bookworm was among us. I noticed her on the forward deck, a shawl wrapped about her shoulders and an open book in her hand, deep wrapped in its mysteries. At long intervals she would yawn and look off to the hills or to some pleasant summer island, but I could see that she was giving the shore and water but passing notice, not taking in at all the lovely homes half hidden among the trees and flowering shrubs. There hour after hour she sat, buried in a book while the boat moved along the beautiful and historic St. Lawrence, bringing into view many a hamlet of storied interest where one's imagination had its ground already prepared to construct poetry, romance and tales of daring and adventure. Even the signs of prosperity were of interest to me: great fields of buckwheat waving in the breeze; pastures in the cool, deep shadows of the clouds; unrolled to my imagination was the history of the winning of the fields from forest and wild hill and valley, the greatest and best battle of our ancestors. With what rude tools, compared with those of to-day, did they build up the great rural expanse of our land, and to some extent in this had our own people shared. These were thoughts linked with the scene that came to me.

We made a short stop at Montreal and obtained a good view of the city, but our objective point was Quebec, "the Gibraltar of America." With what interest we watched the

approach to view of that fortified city, "the sentinel at the portals of the great inland waters of the continent!" What ancient history, for North America, does this city, founded by Champlain in 1608, furnish us. We were out at early dawn to see our destination; but one woman was then on deck and she had her eyes wide open to see the Plains of Abraham where, on that September day in 1759, the noble Montcalm fell, spared the humiliation of defeat, and the gallant Wolfe passed away in blood, denied participation in the glories of his victory.

On landing we found the pier black with people, and carriages and *calaches* thronged the wharves. The hotel criers kept up a perfect din. We secured a French hotel at first, where but one waiter could speak English, where everything was seasoned with garlic and the oatmeal was poor; so later Joseph found a better place, or at least one more suited to our taste, and from this hotel he took us out to see the sights. We did need a guide such as Brother William would have been in all his glorious prime; how our scholar would have recited pages of choice history concerning North America's earliest civilization! We, too, took pride in our great northern continent in this one of its boundaries, though we owned Britain as our parent land alone and not as the governor of our maturity. Unable to express it as we might wish, we yet felt a pride in those Europeans who had brought about in the north the birth of a great country from the forest and had liberated it from the thralldom of savagery and superstition, vice and ignorance. I feel that if William, with his unusual gift of expression and power of imparting knowledge, had been with us in Quebec, he might have left something in my mind well worth my recording in these memoirs of our visit there.

We took a carriage and went to some of the places of interest, and we found Quebec indeed "a little patch of medieval Europe," like nothing we knew in our United States. We visited the French market, more like a camp to our eyes than a market. It was a large open ground where vendors were sitting or standing by the articles they were selling, with little regard for regularity. Vegetables and meats of all kinds were exposed for sale in the open. Some had woolen goods, and

women with hoods or kerchiefs on their heads were sitting out there knitting stockings and selling their products. Altogether this market-place, patterned after southern Europe and the Orient, did not look attractive to us as compared to city markets in our own "States," where under cover in a market-house the foodstuffs are arranged in stalls; but then this old French market had a novelty for us which we would not have missed.

As we were driven on we were shown some of the oldest houses. The restored wall of Quebec keeps its gate open, and the old street within is so narrow that two carriages cannot meet and pass each other there. Here we saw how poor but respectable people can live and at least appear to be happy. The little children were well fed and smiling, and though some greeted us in French many waved to us and said, "How do you do?" in English. They seemed pleased to have their salute returned. The curio shops were well stored with things from all lands, as well as of olden times in our own. Some of the china was quite fine and said to be of early make. One large soup tureen had the citadel of Quebec as its figure; it was blue and white and said to be very ancient. I saw a plate like one Grandmother Watkins had in her cupboard, which I should have enjoyed purchasing and presenting to our family if the one who would have liked most to possess it had been still upon earth. I thought of Brother William often as we passed among the treasured things of old or looked at the curios from China and Japan and the beautiful brass work from Benares in India.

We left the St. Lawrence near Murray's Bay and took a side trip up the Saguenay River to look upon its rarely beautiful scenery, and then at last we were on our way back to New York, to Lake Champlain and the Adirondacks, and those desired scenes of our dear mother's childhood. We set out for Ticonderoga, but on arriving there it took some stretch of the imagination to people it as it was in that time when the grand fortress was all astir with soldiers and richly bedecked generals in their gaudy trappings. It is told that Lord Howe ordered his men to cut their long hair, even as he did himself,



and to disrobe themselves of their coats of scarlet and gold and wear the short army jackets; for the battle-ground was but a wildwood jungle where they fought that hot July day in the Trout Brook country. There in the dense forest Lord Howe fell at the beginning of the fray. The entire ground about Ticonderoga was of peculiar interest.

We stopped in the small town of Ticonderoga at a nice quiet hotel, from which we made visits to the surrounding country. A hard rain had fallen on the night we arrived. In the morning we hired an express and went out to visit the fort. When we drove into the enclosure I noticed that the entire face of the country was covered with a luxuriant growth of grass, looking so fresh after the late heavy rain. I thought to myself, "It is little of stained glass or china that I shall find to-day," but we started to walk out over the old battlefield, where a fine herd of Holstein cattle were grazing peacefully among the ruins. I learned from a resident that there were seven hundred acres in the battlefield. The old parade ground we saw as beautifully green golf links.

The old well which supplied water to the garrison had been left to the ravages of time. A tree had found its way among the stones and almost grown over the mouth of the well. The large stone oven used for baking bread and meats was but a great heap of fragments. The underground passage to the lake gave me an idea of a day long past. All the time we were walking over this famous ground (which to me, after all, was our mother's playground) I kept my eyes open to see if I could find anything such as she had found there when a little girl, and of which she had told me when I myself was but a child. I took a little path which the cattle had worn in wandering from one spot to another until a deep way was eroded where the water rushed along in times of heavy rain, forming little cascades. At the end of one of these water-courses I found a small pool, and here I discovered some bits of stained glass, which I picked up to carry away as precious keepsakes. I found one visitor had a kerchief full of mushrooms, and I thought how true it is that we find that for which we search.

That was a rare day of quiet joy and tender thought.

Our eyes drank in the surroundings with a doubled interest and emotion because the young eyes of our precious mother had looked upon those distant mountains so full of peaceful grandeur. Near those groves of birch and evergreen and by the shining waters of the lake, in the sweet and tender years of childhood, our mother was building up a character which was to make her the fitting companion of her intellectual husband and an example of devotion for her four children. Years afterward she was to talk over with our father the stirring events of the French and Indian War and of those awful slaughters near her old home where Indian, French, English and Colonist poured out their life-blood on that ground till it flowed in rills to touch with its stain the crystal edge of Lake Champlain. I noted that the long line of trenches about the fort were still plainly visible and that quite large trees grew on their sides, showing the passing of years of peace since those bloody days. How true it is, as father used to quote: "War bathes its victims in a fiery flood."

While in the small town of Ticonderoga, brother thought he would like to go out among the Adirondacks and find a wild place far removed from pomp and vainglory, and so when he heard of a place called Eagle Lake, ten miles up in the mountains, we went there in a lumbering old stage. We found it a shady place on the shore of a lake, with an island to add to its view. We reached the mountain hotel in time for dinner. The house had just been enlarged and was nice and clean, with a wide veranda and comfortable chairs. In the early mornings the landlord would go out on the lake to get fish for breakfast. There were summer houses under the trees about the hotel, where a number of Jews from New York City were spending the warm months. They were a well-behaved party of young people.

One day Brother Joseph took us out to dine at Crown Point, but this proved to be not the fort I so desired to see, but a boarding-house called by that famous name. We did not see Crown Point at all, though we were but three or four miles from it and were in no great haste either. It is now but the ruins of a two-million-dollar fortress and is interesting in

itself, though its chief note of association for me was the fact that our mother had walked over the old fortifications of Crown Point as a little girl. Somehow, being among the historic scenes where she spent her childhood made it seem more real to me that, long years ago, our mother had indeed played upon the battlefield of old Ticonderoga, and with young eyes had looked upon its overgrown trenches and broken ramparts, and that her feet had truly clambered over the wonderful ruins of Crown Point. Her memory pictures were at last hung before me in reality.

Our first thought was to continue on to New York City, where Brother Joseph was to meet our nephew Paul, who was going to buy goods for his medical plant in Winona, Minnesota. Later this plan was reconsidered, and a decision was reached that Sister Ida and I should return to Ohio, parting company with our brother at Albany. Before separating, however, we went together to Saratoga Springs. The day we reached there it rained. The crowd was great, and all the better places seemed to be full. We could only secure some poorly kept rooms, and the inferior accommodations shortened our stay. The atmosphere of this resort was depressing to me; it seemed indeed the "broad way," and the words of the old hymn came to my mind as a most fitting description:

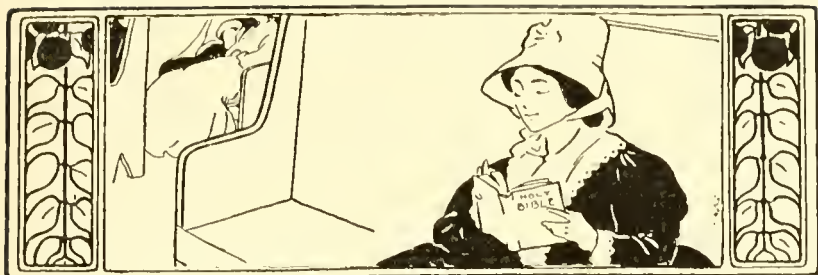
Broad is the way that leads to death,  
And thousands walk together there;  
But Wisdom shows a narrow way,  
With here and there a traveler.

The people whom we met there I had not been accustomed to meet elsewhere — the painted ladies, the gamblers, and the drunken creatures. It was the time of the races, and the crowd was great. The ever-rushing stream of humanity there presented to me a new phase of life, one not pleasant to contemplate, indeed terrible; and I was glad to have our stay shortened on that broad highway.

We remained over one night in the beautiful city of Albany. Here brother gave us a fine dinner at a first-class restaurant, and with a pleasant hour over this "square meal" we parted — he leaving for New York City and sister and I for Cleve-

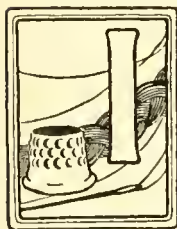
land. We had a fine day for traveling; our magnificent train swept through a rich country, miles of gardens with green-houses, among which I thought I recognized the great conservatories of James Vick's Sons.

As we proceeded on our way we watched with delight the fair fields and orchards bending beneath their loads of apples. I could but note with interest the long ricks of small stone gathered in the far past from the stony fields that now lay smooth and fruitful. These ricks had so long lain out of the way of cultivator and reaper that earth had accumulated in their interstices and blades of grass had sprung up there, leaving long, grassy mounds as memorials of the pioneers' children whose little hands had gathered those same stones from the rough fields — hands long since passed from fields of toil to mingle with "the clods of the valley." I remembered with tender pain that our dear little mother's hands had, from a field in New York, gathered just the same kind of stone to get a place ready for planting on her father's farm, and that in her childhood and early youth she too had a share in making a beautiful and prosperous country fit to perpetuate the memory of a good and industrious kindred.



## CHAPTER V

### OVER THE MOUNTAINS FROM ESSEX COUNTY



It would even now be thought quite a venture to start out with a young family to cross the Alleghany Mountains in a wagon containing the sum of one's earthly possessions, but this daughter of "the schoolground of the American Revolution" had heard good reports of those fertile lands toward the westward, where game and wild fruit were plenty. Grandfather Keeler was a plodder, easy-going and yet industrious; while Grandmother Keeler was business-like, a mother "looking well to the ways of her household." She was tall and of large frame, with dark eyes and hair. I never saw her with understanding eyes, for the last time she was in our house was when I was born. Grandfather was undersized, with very black hair and eyes. I can remember him — a quiet little old man afflicted with rheumatism, so he always carried his crutches.

My mother was about seventeen when they decided to venture westward. Already we infer that she was a leader in the family, and that her enterprise helped her parents in their decision. As in the case of the journey of our Watkins ancestors from New Jersey, we are left in almost complete ignorance of the long and rugged way our Keeler parents came in their oxcart with themselves and five children. The way to the land of their dreams must have seemed long, we think, especially



to the children, who walked most of the distance behind the slowly moving cart. Through sun and storm they plodded over the mountains and all the long road to their objective point in Indiana. They drove their first stake a short distance from the Ohio line on one of the long slopes of the Big Miami Hills. Whitewater, Franklin County, Indiana, was their post office. The year of their removal from New York was about 1821.

The preacher and the teacher were just coming into southern Ohio and Indiana to grow up with the country. Our mother had mastered "the three R's—Readin', 'Ritin' and 'Rithmetic," and so she collected the backwoods children together and taught them. Here, too, we find, she did another kind of pioneer work, not in clearing the stony fields of nature this time, but in planting useful seeds of knowledge in neglected young minds.

The religious awakening of the time reached the home of our maternal grandparents as well. They, too, saw the itinerant preacher on horseback with saddle-bags swung behind his saddle, his horse stumbling over logs and stumps as he looked up his scattered people. It was a great day when Joseph Trowbridge came to the little hamlet on the Miami known as Miamitown, near which our mother and her parents were living. This preacher of the olden time was a "Bible Christian," or of the "Old Christian Order." His theme, too, was "the Bible and the Bible alone," without creeds or confessions of faith. Our mother liked this presentation, for the Bible was already her Book. Though an earnest believer in its teachings, she had not become a member of any denomination. When she heard Joseph Trowbridge's preaching she concluded that she had found the body of believers with whom she could unite in sympathy. Before making a public avowal she went to her mother to confide in her these convictions.

Our grandmother objected because of the obscurity of the people calling themselves simply "Christians," and expressed a wish that her daughter should have a preference for the Methodist Church, as it was popular. The day came, how-

ever, when mother felt that she must make a decision and a public confession of her faith. Her sister was with her at the meeting, and when she arose from her seat to go to the front, Aunt Julia Ann gathered hold of her shawl and tried to detain her; but finding this of no avail the young girl ran home, crying as she went.

Not long after this — we may well presume it was through the medium of Joseph Trowbridge — she was introduced to a sister of his, Miss Maria Trowbridge, who lived in Cincinnati and was a tailoress by occupation. This new acquaintance was an ardent Christian, and proved so congenial that mother cast in her lot with her, and thus a friendship began which lasted through the lives of both. It was one of our mother's sterling characteristics to be constant in her attachments, and this friendship with Maria Trowbridge was one that clung with a fragrance that yet lives in the memory of Sister Ida and me. Maria Trowbridge was a small woman, full of energy and with charming natural gifts; especially to be noted was her voice, which was of peculiar cheerfulness — no one could receive her warm greeting without being thrilled and helped by her pleasing voice and smiling face. She was true to the heavenly precepts and doctrines of the Bible, and with this good friend our mother began life as though anew, casting in her lot with the Bible Christians; and in this act of giving both mind and heart to active Christian service, her ardent soul was given rest and peace. She also began at this time to learn from her friend to be a tailoress. They worked in Miss Trowbridge's shop together, and each had her keynote for service. Miss Trowbridge's was: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," while mother's was "Let your moderation be known unto all men."

While in Cincinnati mother had scarlet fever, and that very severely. She lost the hearing of one ear from this illness. It was her friend, Maria Trowbridge, who nursed her, and our mother arose from her tender ministrations feeling she owed her a debt of love that only some personal service could repay. Years afterward when they were both married the day and the opportunity came, and mother embraced it eagerly.



When Mrs. Fillmore's son Challen was born she suffered with what was then called "nursing sore mouth," and they despaired of her recovery. At once on hearing it mother laid plans to bring her out to our home. She had "Old Rock" hitched to the little covered wagon, placed a feather bed in the back of it, and herself drove to Fulton and brought her friend back with her. Mrs. Fillmore's sister, Mrs. Ford, brought the baby, and we were much interested in his coming.

When she had her dear friend with her and dependent upon her ministry, mother toasted bread with her own perfection in this particular, soaked it in cream, and fed it to the beloved invalid until she was quite recovered and able to return to her young family and the service she delighted to render them. All the many "nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love" which these two women and other dear Christian mothers like them rendered would make a beautiful story. Public charities were not manifold in those days, and the two belonged to those who thought upon the sinning and neglected, the unknown and forgotten poor; and I love to see, though in different ways, these characteristics cropping out in their descendants. Ida and I have this summer (1912) been recalling some of our mother's city mission work, as it might now be called, but which was then but the reaching out of a helping hand to a wretched and dying woman in the slums of Cincinnati.

To return to the days before her marriage, I must tell of our mother's thrift and industry. She was successful in her business undertakings, for besides being a beautiful seamstress she was frugal and a woman of foresight. We know that she was fond of good clothes, and there is yet in my memory the record of a wardrobe she earned for herself while putting by savings as well. I linger over this part, for I love to think that the dear little woman had some of the prettiness she desired while still in her youth. There were two silk dresses, one black and one brown, while a third dress-up gown was from "robe white lawn." It was something like a white embroidered dress pattern of to-day, only the wide border of

flowers at the bottom of the narrow skirt was a brocade woven into the material. I like to fancy our little mother in those gowns, with her dark brown hair and eyes, her clear complexion and red cheeks. Long afterwards old Mrs. Dill was wont to tell Sister Ida and me how much prettier was our mother than either of her daughters. Illness and labors manifold left their marks on the sweet complexion, but those softly shining eyes did not lose their beauty.

As soon as she began to earn money she also began to save it to buy her parents a home. She used as her safety deposit bank a large, empty Mason's Blacking box, and in this she placed her earnings until she had enough to buy a small farm of perhaps ten or twelve acres. This little farm lot was situated on Snow Hill of the Whitewater Hills, not far from Harrison, Ohio, but in Indiana. She built with her careful savings a hewn log house, but it was her ambition to replace it with a larger frame one, and so the Mason Blacking box began to receive coins again. When the amount of her savings began to warrant the planning of a new and better house her elder brother, William, asked a loan, and was given the sum of the contents of the blacking box. Later when she suggested the return of the amount, that she might carry out her original intention, he only laughed and said he had never expected to return the loan; nor did he ever do so. Our dear mother did not dwell upon this disappointment nor allow its injustice to embitter her.

In the course of time in some way, by her industry the hewn logs of Grandfather Keeler's house were weatherboarded and it was well plastered with lime inside, making a good home for our grandparents. Even as late as 1896 it was still standing, and is to us yet a monument of our mother's filial piety. As I recall this little house I seem to see our grandfather, that quiet, little old man, coming out the door with a lot of splint baskets, and our cousins, Aunt Julia Ann's children, helping him up with his load to the back of his old bay horse, called "Old Blaze" because of the blaze of white in his face, and the setting out of the aged basket-maker for some near-by town—himself, his crutches and his wares, all on horseback. Our

Aunt Julia Ann Kilgore lived here and took care of her parents and her large family of children, for our mother gave her sister this home for taking care of their parents in their last days.

The house must have been well built, for when I saw it after the lapse of more than fifty years, and when it had stood for more than seventy years, it seemed to be still in a good state of preservation. It stands just where our mother caused it to be built. When I was there with Brother William in 1896 I could see the garden fence, the grapevines and fruit trees; among the latter I thought that I recognized pear trees from which I ate pears at Aunt Julia Ann's when a child. Long ago the large family of my mother's only sister scattered from that little home. They went to Kansas after the War of the Rebellion, and thus we have lost track of them. I think Aunt Julia Ann died of bronchial consumption, and her death must have occurred about 1874. Grandfather Keeler died in 1848, and grandmother many years before of what people called in those days "bilious colic;" in these it probably would be pronounced appendicitis.

While mother was in Indiana and Ohio came that agitation in religious circles which so influenced her life. Alexander Campbell had come to the front with a still more advanced idea than Barton W. Stone and the "Old Christian Order." "The Bible and the Bible alone" and the "Unity of all Christians" appealed to her as it was about the same time stirring the mind and heart of the young man she was soon to meet, Benjamin U. Watkins. The Trowbridges were soon identified with the Campbell Reformation and were early advocates of the movement. Our mother and her friend, Maria Trowbridge, agreed on this advance and became members of the church then called simply "Christian." The entire country was ablaze with the new doctrine. There was much of discussion concerning creeds, and debates were frequent and heated.

Alexander Campbell was a profound scholar and stood high as a logician; indeed when a granddaughter of Sophronia Keeler was in Glasgow a few years ago, a fellow-traveler of hers, in looking over the old prize lists in the University of Glasgow, found where this Campbell had one time received the prize in Logic, and further in his record it told of his work

as a religious reformer. Alexander Campbell was a man of letters and of a fine and striking personality.

In the spring of 1834 Love H. Jamieson conducted a protracted meeting for those who were connected with this new Christian Church in Harrison. On the front seat sat a little black-eyed woman with her open Bible in her hand; as the preacher backed up all his assertions with proof-texts from Scripture, her fingers flew, finding the references as fast as he gave them out. This little woman was Sophronia Keeler. Among other interested auditors that day was the fair-complexioned student, Benjamin Utter Watkins. He sat near the young woman, and though he saw but dimly he could not notice how rapidly she found the texts which his dear friend, Love H. Jamieson, gave out. Sophronia Keeler and Mr. Jamieson had already met, for he it was who introduced our future parents to each other at father's earnest request.

So it was that they met in a place where they were both interested, and found then, as ever, that upon all the deep things of life, the fundamentals, they were one mind and one soul. It was not long after this first meeting that they were married by Elder Hornaday, on August 10, 1834. One day in the summer, perhaps, of 1856, we were going to Harrison with father, who at stated periods ministered to the church at that place. We passed over the Big Miami River at Miamitown, and as we were mounting the lofty hills the scene was full of rare beauty. Long green slopes and deep ravines led up to the tablelands; even in that early day between Miamitown and Harrison was a splendid macadam pike, which tracked its way among the green hills and valleys, winding from one point to another among the quiet wooded slopes where, in verdant pastures, numerous flocks and herds were grazing. How our father enjoyed driving over those good roads, and with what rich intonations that deep, sonorous voice of his echoed amongst those hills while he repeated some grand psalm or hymn of praise, as

Safely through another week  
God has brought us on our way,  
Let us each a blessing seek  
Waiting in Thy courts to-day.

When with our parents, to whom everything beautiful in God's world was linked with thoughts of Himself, we could readily feel that indeed "the groves were God's first temples."

One day as we were riding through those Miami Hills and were just leaving the valley, at a certain point father checked Jennie and Fannie, the little bay horses he was driving, and, pointing to a lone cabin not far from the road, said: "There is where your mother and I were married!" It was a little one-roomed cabin on a spur of one of the long ridges, and was at that time a stable; an old horse stood by it switching off flies. The situation struck me as being lonely and forbidding in the extreme. Not a question was asked by me that I can remember, and so this fine opportunity to learn of that eventful time was lost. The little cabin had once been our mother's home; there she was married; from that spot amidst the beautiful hills she went to the farm our grandfather had cleared from the forests of Hamilton County, and they started another home. It began in a little one-roomed cabin, too; but those rough walls enclosed a real home, where classic muses were not unknown, and where ancient tongues were discussed and the thinking was truly high, however lowly the life may have been.

Mother tells us that once when she had been absent for a few days she thought on returning that she would open the bed and make it up fresh, and when she came to turn over the feather bed she found that a large black snake had slept between the straw and feather beds and had, in coming forth, left his hide. A search was made, but no further facts were disclosed; and they retired, thinking that Mr. Blacksnake was hunting mice and was a harmless reptile, and so they slept in their bed with undisturbed slumber. In this little home we "log cabin children" were born, and we were wont to brag of it to little Joe and Ida in the years of childhood. William was born there on October 5, 1836, and I, named for our Aunt Julia Ann, first saw the light in that little log cabin on October 13, 1838.

It was not the intention of our parents to spend their entire time in farming, so they studied together in the long evenings



about the fireside of that first little home. Church history and Bible literature were the main subjects. Mother had candle molds and plenty of candles, so we fancy the picture our parents made in their youth — mother with her dark head, upon which rested the matron's cap, and father, a contrast with his fair ruddiness and already silvering locks — they sit in their one room, with candles lighted and an open book, perhaps Josephus or D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation or Rawlins' Ancient History, or it may have been one of the popular poems of their day — Paradise Lost or Young's Night Thoughts; and so it was that their little home came to be like Jacob's ladder, a very gate of Paradise. 1

All the time our father was preparing himself to minister to the church, which in those days demanded real meat and the brightest and best presentation a preacher could give. The minds of the period were hardy, hungry and strong, not dissipated but ready to direct their whole attention to what the minister had to give, and auditors felt defrauded were no thought required of them. Thus it was that our father delighted in preparing thoughtful, solid sermons, which his love for the sublime made him able to clothe in beautiful words for peroration or eloquent climax.

Our mother was ever an interested listener, who was by his side in their evenings at home to learn all that she could. With her sewing or knitting, work that occupied so much time, she was still at liberty to listen and learn. The desire for self-improvement and the acquisition of knowledge was an unquenched flame in that home where all our homes began, and they made their opportunities for learning over a hard, rough and shadowed way when we compare their advantages with those of their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We may be thankful that noble intelligences and pious spirits burned with their own light in the little cabin on grandfather's farm.

Mother was a prudent business woman; Brother Joseph and I have often spoken of her ability in that line, and his interest in business and his traits of caution and acumen combined he seemed to have inherited from her. Early in their

married life she told father, if he desired to travel in the interests of the church, to go forth with her full consent, and she would look after the things at home. For years mother, with the aid of a tenant or hired man, looked after the farm and all the interests of home. In this way, while our father preached we had a fixed place of abode, undisturbed by the frequent movings which kept the homes of other itinerant ministers in a state of constant upheaval.

As I look over the long years that have passed, I see how much of good judgment she showed; she kept her boys at home and they were taught to work and to be self-reliant. We were near to the city and to good educational advantages; there was no better institution than Farmers' College for the boys, and that was in easy reach of our home. Father's trips abroad were short, and we were happy and content. To illustrate how freely she sent our father to his work, and that she was indeed a colaborer at home, I will here insert a precious letter she wrote to father in 1849, and which has been for years in my possession. The paper upon which this letter is written is folded to form a wrapping, and it was sealed with a red seal. There is no stamp, but "5" is written in the stamp corner, indicating that the postage was five cents. It is addressed to our father at Salem, Ohio, and reads as follows:

Saturday, Sept. 22d, 1849.

DEARLY BELOVED: I this day received your kind letter at Lloydsville. The difficulty in our correspondence arose from my not receiving your first letter in time to know where to address you and also misunderstanding your first place of address. I suppose however, that you have heard from me at Lloydsville before this date, as I sent one to the office on last Monday.

I am truly glad to hear of the prosperity of the church in Morgan County. Union is strength and Knowledge is power and Zeal gives energy. Surely much good might be done where the churches had on all the armor.

We are getting along very well living on sweet potatoes. Beans all in the barn ripe and dry; hogs getting fat on apples; another increase of pigs; Ann is washing; Ida, William and Joseph shelling beans. Ann says you will almost shout for joy when you get this letter. William takes my butter to Carthage, he rises early and goes to milking, so you see we have not brought him up for nothing.



I have not been able to raise the funds high enough yet to get my carpet, so when you send me the next twenty dollars I will have five left and then I will have to go to the City and see if I can find it. Do not be uneasy about your family. We have the same Protector as when you are here. Just think did any evil ever befall me when you were out preaching except when you went to a slave state?

It is true I should like your presence in the family circle, but for the sake of having one more laborer in the vineyard I yield my right and say: "Proclaimers On!" until the song of victory is high raised: "Now is come Salvation!"

May the Lord prosper you in speaking "all the words of this life," and give you that strong confidence in his promises that will keep your mind calm. Just think "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open to their prayers." So if we sustain the character of the righteous we are all safe through grace.

I will have to cut short my discourse, work, you know, is always abundant.

S. WATKINS.

B. U. WATKINS.

DEAR FATHER: I wish you were at home. You do not know how well we get on eating sweet potatoes. I generally get up and milk before sunrise. I go to school now. We have a real pedagogue. Anson is topping corn and says he intends to top the whole lower fields. I believe I have no more to say, but remember that gold dollar. I have bladed fifty bundles of blades. W. WATKINS.

This was Brother William's addition to mother's letter. I also essayed to write something, but "My dear father" is all that remains extant. I thoroughly marked out the rest on that page and cut out what I had written on the next because of certain remarks of my big brother concerning my chirography or, more probably, my spelling. He himself did not at the age of fourteen promise to become the beautifully clear penman he eventually did, but how characteristic of him is the word "pedagogue." In those days I was usually called by my second name, "Ann."

The spirit of the times is shown in mother's reference to a "slave state." Those old days are gone now, and with them went the slave's bonds from our land. I look at this faded letter, and I can but meditate on those years of childhood. I was but eleven years old when I ruthlessly scratched out my attempt at letter-writing, and Sister Ida was but five. Our

dear mother had the care of home and farm upon her when she wrote this letter sixty-three years ago.

The poem she mentions she used often to recite, and it is still in an old scrapbook of father's which dates back to 1852. Sister Ida now owns the book, and this is a stanza copied from it:

Proclaimers on! the wasting walls  
Of Babylon are crumbling fast;  
Her tallest towers are trembling now  
Before the Gospel's searching blast.  
Let fly the pointed barbs of truth,  
Winged with strong hands and deathly aim,  
He knocked the world's rank, raging ruth  
For Christ shall put your foes to shame.

Our grandfather's farm was given to father to work, although they had a home there all their lives. It was inherited by father undivided on account of what he called "an act of almost unparalleled generosity" on the part of Uncle Joseph. Because of father's defective sight his elder brother gave over his share in the farm to him; and it was settled that their parents should remain in father's care for life, while Uncle Joseph started out for himself without a patrimony. Later in these annals will be written our father's own estimate of this deed.

Our parents began very simply their life together, but they had comforts. Their first horse was "Old Rock," a kind and well-disposed animal, who was our main dependence as far as horses are concerned until I was twenty years old. The cow, "Old Red," was of like nature with "Old Rock" and was our stand-by. Good milk and cream and butter she gave us while she lived, and her daughters and granddaughters after her supplied our dairy. She lived to a good old age for a bovine and had a real share in our life on the farm. It is a precious heritage to me to recall the simplicity of the life of our parents during those years and the treasures of mind and spirit they acquired in their little home on the farm.

In the year 1838 our father was in Wilmington attending some religious gathering. While sitting upon a porch conversing with Walter Scott, a rare and brilliant minister of the Christian Church, the eyes of the latter caught sight of a piece

of paper blowing about the yard, which he went and picked up. As he came back reading it he said, "Brother Watkins, here's something fine!" The vagrant scrap of paper contained a poem entitled "Babylon." Those two who loved the sublime in any form reveled in what had been borne to them, and I wish we might have heard them reading it. Walter Scott had a most melodious voice that rolled out with a musical Scottish brogue; he was a great man and a learned scholar of the University of Glasgow. Many a time the poem found that day must have rung out in the little log cabin where William and I were born, for we learned it — indeed I think we all must have been able to repeat "Babylon" entire at some time in our lives; and because it was a poem recited in the house where we "log cabin children" were born, and still seems grand to me, and because our father's voice glides along its measure in full-toned eloquence for me still, I want to write it here.

I climbed the cliff—I crossed the rock—  
I trod the deserts old—  
I passed the wild Arabian's tents,  
The Syrian shepherd's fold,—  
Behind me far all haunts of men  
Stretched into distance gray,  
When spread before me, lone and wide,  
The plain of Shinar lay;  
The boundless plain of far Shinar,  
Where long, long ages back  
Abdallah read the silent stars,  
And watched their mystic track.

Where art thou, gem of the rich earth,  
City of fair renown,  
The glory of the proud Chaldee,  
The green earth's ancient crown?  
Where lies the lake that gleaming wide  
Gave back thy hundred towers;  
Where are thy gardens of delight,  
Thy cedar shaded bowers;  
Where, where, O where, rolls rapidly  
Thine ever flashing river,  
Past marble gates and column'd towers,  
Guarding thy walls forever?

There is no voice of gladness here,  
No breath of song floats by!  
I hearken—but the moaning wind  
Is all that makes reply.  
Solemn and lone the silent marsh  
Spreads endlessly around,  
And shapeless are the ruined heaps  
That strew the broken ground.  
Sadly above huge outlines dim,  
Sighs the lone willow bough,  
The last, last voice of Babylon  
Its only music now!

Son of Mandana! by whose hand  
The doomèd city fell—  
The swift feet of whose soldiery  
Climbed tower and citadel;  
Thou foundest revelry and mirth,  
Thou foundest dance and song;  
Thou foundest many a banquet fair,  
And many a joyous throng.  
Like the death angel camest thou,  
When men were care-bereft;  
And is this lone, waste wilderness  
The total thou hast left?

Oh, glorious were her palaces  
And shrines of fretted gold,  
Where rose the fame of Merodack,  
The house of Belus old—  
And busy life was in her streets,  
Where countless nations thronged;  
Light footsteps glided through her homes,  
And mirth to her belonged.  
But prophet voices murmured there,  
E'en in her festal halls;  
Angel finger wrote her doom  
Upon the palace walls.

At midnight came the Persian,  
Mingling amid the crowd.  
He heeded not the beautiful,  
He stayed not for the proud.  
False was her fated river,  
Heedless her gods of stone;

He entered at the open gates,  
He passed—and she was gone!  
Her place on earth abideth not,  
Memorial she hath none;  
Darkness and ruin thou mayst find,  
But never Babylon!

The terrible finality of the climax filled my childish soul with wonder, and many were the questions that ran through my thoughts about Babylon, as “How is so much known about a city that was lost?”

When I was a little girl our parents decided to build a frame house, and father selected the spot for its location, which had been the very first opening in the forest and where the seedling walnut of his boyhood had grown to be a beautiful tree. There he built the home where we children grew to manhood and womanhood. While the new house was in the process of erection we lived in grandfather’s house, and there Brother Joe was born, August 21, 1840. My first memory of my little brother disclosed him standing in front of the house crying very loudly, which so impressed me that the picture he made remains with me. His little round face was very red and his black eyes wrinkled shut with weeping. I have no memory of him as a baby, for I was not two years old when he was born.

As I think of the times and what the long years have revealed to me, I believe the more that we were happy little children to have been born into so comfortable a home where were books and aspirations, and most of all where there was a deep faith in the Bible and where its precepts were followed in an active Christian life. Our studious father and our wise mother were gifts of greatest value. We were glad that in her youth the latter was able to walk over the mountains from New York; that she was brave enough and strong enough to do it; and that there in Ohio she found her husband and children and home; for never was there a more perfect mother of children, it has always seemed to us. Our mother never spoke an angry word to one of her children; her self-control was absolute. When we recount the royalty of our mother, it is but a deserved tribute to the dear woman who through all our tender

years guided our infant feet; and our surviving parent inscribed upon her marble tablet some words from the wisest man who ever lived. In the quiet spot where she was laid to rest he had a stone erected, upon which was described his noble wife, the inspiration of all his struggling years: "*Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, he praiseth her.*"





## CHAPTER VI

### THE OLD FARM



HAT a wealth of associations clusters about the old farm which James Watkins, our grandfather, cleared from the primitive forest! Where shall I begin to write of those acres bought from one Finney, who obtained his patent from government in the beginning of the nineteenth century and transferred his right to our grandfather not far from the year 1804? From him it descended to our father, so that to us children it seemed our own little world, in which we might always live just as we had done — a world whose lines were well defined by the fences which bound in this little farm: Neighbor Isaac Bruin on the east, Robinson and Raymond on the west, Alexander and Matthew Brown on the north, and James Cummings on the south. I remember all these lines, with the thick rails staked with heavy riders to keep out breachy cattle; these were the boundaries to our little world of home. To scale the high fences was to make a lofty and daring venture out into the great world; places of defense were they, too, when being chased by dogs or fierce domestic animals, such as Jennie, our cross horse.

Here on the old farm we four children were born, as our father had been before us. Brother William, the eldest, in early childhood gave promise of the intellectual man he became



in later years. Before he could read he used to stand on a chair before the map of the world which hung on the wall and call off the countries with their long hard names, and even the islands of the sea. I, a little three-year-old, used often to stand beside him in front of that map and hear him go over the strange foreign names — Borneo, Sumatra, and the rest. I wonder what kind of a picture we made in child garments of seventy years ago — he in his little butternut suit of jeans, short jacket, and trousers to the shoe-tops; and I, a little yellow-haired girl in a pink calico pinafore, who, when we were side by side, did not reach to his brown curls. I think we must have cut a quaint figure with a map of the whole world unrolled before us.

William was an honest boy, brimful of mischief but always ready to own to the truth, even to his own hurt. When he knew that the rod would not be spared, he would stand and testify with all the gravity due to an occasion of the greatest moment, while I would look on with fear and admiration. I, the elder daughter, was in many ways quite different from William. My complexion was fair; I had blue eyes, ruddy cheeks, and light hair. While I was thought to be witty and ready of answer, I had not the depth of intellectual endowment which he certainly possessed. His superiority made me feel how little I knew, and being of a sensitive nature comparisons sometimes stung me to the heart.

Next in order came Brother Joseph; he, too, was unlike either of us. He had a soft pink complexion and sandy hair, very fine and shining in the sunlight; his dark eyes, dark to blackness, were not unlike our mother's in color. He loved quiet plays and would amuse himself by the hour, singing all the while some happy little notes. He early marked out his own career. How well do I remember, in the long winter evenings while mother was making the boys' coats by the light of her two candles, little Joe would be building his air castles, thinking what he would be when he grew to manhood. So earnest would he become that he would arise from his little red chair, stretch himself to his full height, and say in tones of

deepest earnestness: "When I get to be a big man I will be rich; I will have fine houses and carriages and horses; I will get a nice wife —" then, as if in deep thought, he would add musingly, "Where will I get mine children?" After a moment's pause a bright flash would light his ruddy face and he would exclaim: "I know; I will go to meeting and grab one!" He told mother what he would do for her, for his love for his mother was ever deep and lasting. With the first money he ever earned he bought her a nice dress. It is not often the dreams of childhood are so nearly fulfilled as were those of our younger brother.

The average home of those days had but few luxuries; cooking stoves were just being introduced. Our grandfather was one of the first to buy one. The small stoves cost some thirty or forty dollars. They would be considered of a strange pattern now, opening with one big door in front on hinges like a barn door and with a latch like our old-fashioned doors. The lids had bails like buckets; the casting was heavy and rough, but it did fairly well, and would bake two pies or three loaves of bread in the oven at a time. The variety of food in those days was meager; pork and beans was one of the staples, dried fruit a luxury. If the wheat crop failed the family lived on corn bread; if the cows ceased to give milk we did without. Orleans molasses was thought to be a treat; all the sugar we had was brown. Once mother bought loaf sugar, and this was kept in a clean pillow case in the bureau drawer for sickness. I like to think that the years added some comforts. It was very hard on mother to bend over the hot open fires until her face was flushed and veins distended, and I am glad our grandfather was one of the first to get a cook stove.

The record of the time our grandparents lived on the farm as well as we is not clearly remembered by me; especially is the memory of grandmother veiled deeply by the mist of years, as I was but a child of six when she died. I recall the fact that I delighted to go down to see the old people, whose home was but a few rods away, just across the road from our new frame house which father built after our first cabin home. I can re-

member father's picking me up and carrying me over the road when the stiff yellow clay had made mortar of what in summer was a good smooth road.

We children used to love to watch our grandmother comb her hair; it was so long and beautifully white, as she sat in her chair it would almost reach the floor. I can yet see its silver sheen as she drew the coarse comb through those long, shining strands; next she would make a fine coil, doing it up and sticking a heavy back comb in the roll, and then it was "done up" but not finished. A headband of black silk ribbon was bound about that fine, white forehead, and over all a white lace net cap with a frill pleated very full. All married women in early times wore caps, no matter how young was the matron; this was the insignia of her wedded estate, and we younger people thought them all "old married folks" who must wear dark clothes — white was forbidden to wives who would follow "good form."

I recall that one day Brother William and I spent a forenoon with grandmother. We often went there to look at the pictures in her old Bible. On this particular morning she interested us by telling fortunes with bread and cake and a piece of charcoal. She placed in a saucer these three things, and then set the dish on the old Bible. In her hand was a small ball of woolen yarn, which she suspended over the center of the saucer, and as the ball oscillated to and fro we would eagerly await the place of stopping. Should it come to rest at the bit of cake, that meant good news from some far-away relative who at that time happened to be in grandmother's mind; but sad was it when the ball ceased to vibrate at the lump of charcoal, for that meant death! Bread meant something fortunate. I relate this memory of my childhood to illustrate that the traditions of New England still existed and that the old days of belief in witches had not entirely passed away. Grandfather used to tell of witches leaving their abodes and flying away on a broomstick through an open upstairs window on dark nights. They were awesome stories.

I remember well that grandmother came over one morning to talk with mother on business, and I saw that she was cry-

ing. It seems she was telling mother of a bundle of woolen yarn she wished her granddaughter Rachel Cole to have, and then she added a number of bequests; but this is the only item I can recall. After she was gone I asked what it was that made grandmother cry, and mother told me that poor grandmother thought that she was going to die, but that she often felt that way; and our mother spoke in such an assuring manner that I thought little of it. Not long after this, as she was stepping out of our back door she had a hard fall and hurt her breast, but this was not thought to be serious. I have wondered since if this accident might not have been a remote cause of what followed.

One cold, frosty morning in October the old people were up early and had old Fannie hitched to the little Jersey wagon. Our father, a hired man and Brother Will were to go to the city to do some trading that day, and they started out with our grandparents, who seemed in good health and spirits. Old Fannie was a balker and had one of her unfortunate moods. When she reached "Acorn Hill," or "Raymond's Hill" as it was called, our folks had to unload and walk up the little steep pitch. Our father was walking by his mother's side when she suddenly cried out, "Oh, that old pain in my heart!" and dropped to the ground. When father stooped to assist her she was breathing a deep, apoplectic snore. He ran a short distance over the field to Dr. Beach's, but on his return she had passed away. This was about sunrise; mother was getting breakfast for us and we were still in our trundle-bed when father came in all breathless, his face red from his haste. Opening the door he leaned back against it and delivered the astonishing news, "Mother's dead!"

Thus upon October 31, 1843, occurred the first tragedy of our lives — the lesson of death that sooner or later all must learn. At once mother made the house ready to receive the lifeless form of our grandmother. Neighbors came, bearing her body on a bier they had hastily prepared. I can never forget that home-coming nor the awful majesty of her appearance as she lay there wrapped in her shawl with her hood still tied over her beautiful white hair. I noticed that the blood

had settled on her neck in dark spots. Poor old grandfather went about the house with quiet resignation, realizing that for him she would never keep house nor cook food again. Our grandmother was born in the Passaic Valley in New Jersey on October 10, 1770, so she was aged seventy-three years and three weeks when she passed away.

Neighbor Cummings and the people at Finneytown Corners, with Mrs. Preston and the VanZandts, McCash's and Bruins, were there to do what they could — they were good neighbors. Brother William and I left the house while preparations were going on for the funeral. We found an old dry tree which had been burning and had fallen across a little stream. This ancient tree was an old friend of ours, where we used to watch the bright woodpeckers with their red top-knots making holes in the dry and half-rotten wood. So full were our child hearts of sadness that day that we could not feel our usual interest in watching the smoldering ruins of our old companion of the woods, nor did we form any comparison between our grandmother lying lifeless in our home and this noble old tree fallen in the forest; but some way there we chose to sit and think over our loss.

The next day it rained, clearing off in time for the funeral, however, which was held in our front room and was attended by all the neighbors. I remember how some of them brought in boards, placing them on chairs to make benches. Brother Joe and I were seated by our mother, and when the minister gave way for the friends to have the last look, mother said to us: "Come and look at grandmother for the last time." So with many tears we stood beside the coffin, and there for the first time we felt the sublime meaning of death. I realized it to be our last look, and I remember my grief. Strangest of all, little brother Joe thought grandmother was asleep, and though he was but three years old at the time of her death he remembered that day as long as he lived.

Our grandmother was buried on a lofty hill on the road to Cincinnati, a path they had often followed going to and from market. She rests among scenes of nature rarely excelled for beauty amounting to grandeur. Beside this grave we had our



first lesson in the desolation of the tomb. On arriving at the open grave, and while standing by mother, I looked down to see how deep it was and found the grave was filling with muddy, yellow water from the clay sides. This was dipped out, and with straps the coffin began its journey from our sight into the grave, and soon our grandmother's last bed was hidden forever away. After our grandparents both rested in that cemetery, their graves were marked by simple marble slabs giving the dates of their birth and death.

The Farmers' Lyceum named our home "Walnut Tree Farm" because of the large walnut tree in front of our house. Before Mr. Finney bought it from government an opening had been made in the forest by the Indians, and there, more than a hundred years ago, some careless squirrel dropped a walnut; and in due time a sprout sprang up from it and grew, and by the second year it made a shade sufficient for grandfather's water jug. Our father remembered its grateful shade in his own and its youth, and he told us its history. Such trees grow rapidly for the first four or five years, and our walnut tree was of fine proportions, growing tall and straight and spreading its plummy branches so it cast a shade over our entire yard. In its shadow we children played all summer long. Our brothers went to the woods in search of long grapevines of just the proper thickness for a swing; then with their combined energy they climbed and boosted until the best and strongest limb was found, and when the swing was completed we all got hold and tested its strength. Next, notches were sawed in a board which made a wide and comfortable seat; and the triumphant finish was celebrated with joyful shouts. Very far over the green grass reached the grapevine swing; it was amusement and refreshment; out from the hot kitchen we sisters would escape to cool off beneath the shade of the dear old walnut tree, while we took turns in the swing.

I seem to see Aunt Rachel Stevens (father's cousin) and mother as they sewed in the shade in the hot days of summer. They often sat on grandfather's old settee which stood at the foot of the great tree, and those whom the swing could not accommodate the settee could. Ned, our pet squirrel, used

to run up the tree and hang on by his hind legs and bark at us, nor would he come down until we showed him a nut to eat; then he would come with a bound. Perhaps you think I may not remember Neddie's tragic and ignoble end, but I do: he departed this life because of a spirit of investigation which prompted him to eat a poisoned rat-wafer, and he died greatly lamented.

We even entertained beneath the walnut tree. As I sit here alone, after most of the people who met in its large shade are gone beyond recall and the actors in the drama of our youth seek its green carpet no more, I see again some of the scenes enacted there. I recall a red-letter day when the Farmers' Lyceum came over from Cheviot and out from Farmers' College for their monthly meeting, which took the form on this occasion of a picnic beneath our walnut tree. Long tables were spread in its generous shade, and all seemed to enjoy the outing. The president of the College spoke to the members that day. All sorts of questions concerning agriculture were discussed by the Lyceum, and the desire for improved methods was always evident. This organization would be called a club nowadays, I suppose. It was a spot of real culture in our rural life.

Among other duties our dairy made work, and we were very busy before market days, which were Tuesdays and Fridays as I remember. We girls churned and mother worked the butter out into pound rolls, usually as many as forty, and wrapped each in a clean white cloth. In order to be in market early, father and mother would be up and off by two o'clock in the morning, having had breakfast in the night. Should the morning be stormy it was a dark and dismal ride to Cincinnati, down the long hill by Spring Grove Cemetery and across Mill Creek and on to the city. When they reached the place of marketing they backed the spring wagon up to the curbstone, where they found many early birds ready to buy their butter and boxes of fresh eggs, as well as cottage cheese and bunches of flowers I had gathered from our garden and arranged. Mother was to use the money for which she sold the bouquets to buy plants for our flower beds, such as ver-



benas of pretty colors. She took her knitting with her to market and in odd moments would ply her needles.

In midsummer it was dreadfully hot in the city, and by the time of returning the sun would just pour down his rays, but we girls tried to have everything well done before their homecoming. The boys had milked the cows, we had skimmed the milk and done the day's churning, and salted the butter and put it down in the cool, brick-lined cellar. The "lopped" milk had been poured out for the fine hogs which fed and rooted and slept down in one of the orchards. The crocks were washed and placed in the sun to get sweet, and dinner was all ready when the parents came home. We girls would be looking for some new things — a lawn dress, a parasol, new shoes and stockings, or even a mantilla. There were fresh supplies for the cupboard — tea, sugar, and coffee; things to be untied and placed in the pantry; and what joy it gave us sisters to look over the things from the city and put them away.

After a while we could wash the clothes while mother was gone to market and have them flying on the line or spread bleaching on the green grass when she returned. How happy was the dear face when they came driving up to the gate. True, she looked tired and her cheeks were often sunburnt, but then she was the mother of children who loved her and were glad to make life's burdens lighter for their parents. Our father and mother were benevolent; their religion was not of word alone but of deeds of kindness to the poor and unfortunate. "Old Rock," the family horse, was slow and quiet — quite safe to take the little mother on errands of love. Three miles away at the foot of a long hill and over Mill Creek was the town of Carthage, where father and mother were charter members of the Christian Church, and where the former often preached unless some itinerant minister happened to be there. Many poor people who were day laborers and had but scanty fare lived in Carthage in those days; our mother "thought upon them," and on Saturday afternoons when the week's work was done we would load up the express wagon for her to take to Carthage. Not only did she go to get the mail, but to fulfil her errands of mercy.

In the morning we had scalded the sour milk instead of feeding it to the pigs, and when it was properly drained and salted a bowl of cream was added, and this cottage cheese was placed in a three or four-gallon stone jar and nicely covered. Then apples were gathered and such garden stuff as might be acceptable, and as soon as dinner was over Rock was in the harness and ready to take mother and her load of love to different homes in Carthage where her gifts would be welcome. I visited the old church at Carthage after my head was white, and I found that our mother's memory was as fragrant as the memory of Dorcas, being remembered for the almsdeeds which she had done twenty-five years before.

I can easily recall many instances of the unassuming benevolence of our parents. One hot day in July, 1850, father came in from the field and declared his intention to go down to Carthage to make some needed purchases and get the mail. On his return he called mother in to hear a letter read from one of their friends who lived in Cincinnati, and who through heat and overwork was languishing amid the close and stifling brick walls. In the letter he told father of his suffering condition and said he felt sure that if he could be taken to the country, out on the Vine Street Hill, and breathe the sweet, pure air from the clover fields, he would soon be well. As soon as preparations could be made, father took the white covered market wagon and one of mother's feather beds with plenty of pillows and quilts and started for the city. Into this wagon, specially prepared for him, our invalid, Dr. Gatchell, was carefully placed.

I remember their arrival, as they drove into the yard under the spreading walnut tree, and how pale and thin the sick man looked. Mother gave him her large, cool, front room, shaded by porches and many trees. Here he was to find the products of the farm — butter, milk and cream, with apples and peaches and new corn and beans. His wife was with him, a lovely lady whose father was one of the early pioneers of our church in Cincinnati, Thurston Crane. Truly the doctor knew the proper remedy for himself, as in a few days he

declared himself better and was out in the yard and under the trees all through the long days. The theme in those days about our father's table was church union and the triumph of the Gospel over all barriers. The hospitality of the times was simple and warm, and the memory of the table-talk has influenced my whole life to better thinking.

In a few weeks Dr. and Mrs. Gatchell returned to the city with many expressions of gratitude. This is but one instance where our parents opened their home to the afflicted "without money and without price." Surely those were days of sincere Christian hospitality, when it was often said, "How these Christians love one another!" We considered it a happy day when father would bring home a carriage load of preachers from a convention. How I loved to hear them tell of Walter Scott and Alexander Campbell and see such men as Jasper Moss and H. R. Pritchard, giants of our childhood! I remember on one occasion finding Brother Challen and Benjamin Franklin at breakfast when I came to the table. I can yet remember those strong preachers of the Reformation as they looked in their prime. A description of the farm and our home there would not be complete without a mention of our honored guests who brought to us so much of the world of thought.

Our Cincinnati relatives always seemed interested in us, and would often stop to see us on their way to Hamilton to visit other members of the family. Among the ones who visited us was father's cousin, Mary Scudder, who married Elijah Norton, one of the first ice men of the city. It always pleased us to find their carriage hitched in front of our gate. They had a daughter, Joanna Norton Hawk, who was a neighbor of ours on the north. Her husband was captain of a steamboat plying between Cincinnati and New Orleans and was a man of some wealth. Dear Mrs. Norton often visited her daughter, and I remember to have called at Joanna Hawk's one day when her mother was there. Joanna and I were gathering flowers when the dear old lady came out with a britannia teapot in her hand, which she was polishing with a soft piece

of flannel until it shone in the sunlight. This was quite characteristic of the Scudder family, always industrious and doing things in the nick of time.

Mrs. Norton's sister, Rachel Scudder Stephens, was also a lovely old lady whom, though she was father's cousin, we always called "Aunt Rachel." She would make long visits at our home in the summertime and she and mother were fond of each other. These two congenial spirits would spend the early morning hours in doing up the work and shelling peas and stringing beans on the shady back porch. When that was done they would get their sewing, for everything was then made by hand and the moments were valuable. Aunt Rachel was a fine needlewoman, as were all of the Scudder women.

It is a joy to recall the quietude of the farm and the dear old friends who shared with us its rural comforts. I remember a year of plenty when our trees were bending beneath their load of apples; people came out from the city and saw the fruit rotting on the ground by bushels, and thought how glad they would be for these culls from which to make apple butter. Among them was a friend of our parents, Rebecca Tomlinson, an unmarried woman of perhaps forty-five years. She was a seamstress, and went about among her friends helping in the housework and sewing at intervals. She saw how our fruit was going to decay and thought out a scheme by which she could help to save a lot of our apples by drying them or making apple butter. She donned some old clothes and borrowed a large copper kettle from Aunt Betsy McCash, and went to work with enthusiasm to "save the fruit." She first gathered the sweet apples and boiled them and pressed out the juice; next she boiled this juice down almost to molasses to help sweeten the apple butter. The best windfalls were now picked up, and in the evenings she would pare and core and quarter her fruit.

In the morning the big copper kettle was hung from a pole supported by forked posts out near the woodpile, where "old Aunt Becky" made ready to operate her apple butter works. Here she stood and stirred with a long ladle made for the purpose; day after day, in rain or shine, she kept the

kettle boiling, never complaining — she was too happy as an economist. To save the fruit amounted to a duty with her, especially as she thought how the apple butter would bless some of her poor relations. The autumn weather often disappoints, and rain comes down amid falling leaves and smoke and haze, and so it was one day I well remember when Aunt Becky still stood at her post. She was a determined woman and kept up her fire, wearing one of the men's coats and a pair of boots. She was a picture as her tall, thin form bent to the work of stirring, dressed in that combination of masculine and feminine attire. Brother Will was a boy of twelve years, who was looking on and saw the ridiculous side, which called forth from him a short parody on "The Fall of the Great Napoleon," where it says of him:

He grasped without remorse and wore without shame  
The diadem of the Caesars!

Will's version, applied to Aunt Becky, was:

She grasped without remorse and wore without shame  
Father's boots!

After some two weeks, about midnight Aunt Becky finished her last kettle of apple butter and filled it into her half-barrel, then placing the McCash's copper kettle over her head like an enormous bonnet, she started for Uncle Jimmie's, distant three quarters of a mile. Alas! She had burned the last butter she made and so injured the kettle that not long after Aunt Betsy McCash had to have it rebottomed; and I dare say she wished old Aunt Becky had been satisfied with one kettle less of apple butter to distribute in her philanthropies. When her apple butter works were closed down and all the tubs and half-barrels were ready for transportation, Aunt Becky was well satisfied and took her stores to the city and shipped them on the Ohio River to her relatives. She came around once a year to see how we were doing, and the last time she visited us she taught me a new system for cutting out dresses. She also bleached and pressed bonnets, and was helpful in many ways. She loved to do acts of benevolence. I



heard of her many years later on her way to Bethany College in West Virginia with two young students she wished to assist in gaining an education; and so it was that, doing good, old Aunt Becky passed beyond our ken.

We did not care enough about apple butter to make a business of preserving it as did so many in Ohio, but we still found plenty to do on the old farm, even after the spinning wheel and shuttle were at rest down in the old weave shop in grandfather's orchard. The program of the year was changed somewhat by the progress of invention, but it still held many tasks on that old farm. Every eight weeks mother picked her geese in the seclusion of the old barn. There she sat down on an ancient splint-bottomed chair and prepared for the plucking. We children had driven the geese from the pasture into the barnyard in the morning, in order to get them settled for the ordeal of the picking by afternoon. When dinner was over we opened the barn door and very carefully persuaded an old gander to act as captain by getting him across the barn sill, and then the rest would follow him into its covering. As mother plucked the feathers she dropped them into an old boiler by her side, and when a goose was bereft of some of her extra covering, Joe or I went in and threw the big bird out the barn door into the orchard. Should the plucked bird be a gander he went off with a shout of triumph, shaking his wings and scattering down like a small snowstorm, and deporting himself among the other geese as though he had just attained a great victory. How disgusted we would be with his arrogance! Nothing vanquishes a gander. As the result of these pluckings down in the barn, we had six feather beds and many pillows and bolsters.

Fruit-drying time was a busy season; we had pleasant evenings then, when the whole family pared apples and cored and quartered them ready to dry. On the floor of the upper south porch was an excellent place to dry fruit, and there we spread our apples; if untimely wet weather came on, we would have to string the quarters on twine and hang them about the kitchen stove to complete the process. Harvesting, thrashing, corn-husking — the summer and the early autumn fled,

and life was busy, wholesome, and worth living, but it was not easy. It was independent and vigorous, but one task followed another in swift succession.

Slaughter day on the old farm came early in the winter, as soon as cold weather was established, usually about the middle of December. It was a harvest of meat to which we looked forward each year, in common with other farmers' families who lived out of reach of meat markets. True, Mrs. Reidenhaur used to come once a week, on Saturdays, with fresh meat — veal and lamb and beef; but from our own home market the blessing was more abundantly diffused. Mrs. Reidenhaur was a bright little German woman who for some reason had to do her own killing, and with the aid of her son dress all her meat for marketing. I never met but this one woman who herself followed the business of a butcher. She drove a white covered market wagon and had her meats protected by clean canvas. Her cuts were always clean and fresh and good.

Great were the preparations we made for our annual butchering — knives were sharpened, a barrel was tilted in the ground at just the right angle, a scaffold was made on which to scrape the bristles from the victim, and warlike indeed was the outlook on our quiet farm. On the day fixed we would waken about four o'clock in the morning to find father and the man of all work on hand and a fire blazing under the great iron pot, while steam and smoke were ascending and the fire was spreading light all over the orchard. The chickens roosting in the trees about were craning their necks and wondering what was going on at that early hour. Our breakfast was ready and over before the usual time, and as soon as we got up from the table there would be our neighbor VanZandt to tell us all was in readiness to begin the fray.

Now Will loaded the gun and as chief executioner went down to the running ground of the pigs in the orchard. There he shot them, one by one, as fast as the previous one was dressed. It was scarcely as exciting on the field of carnage as in the house, where our little sister kept running each time she knew a shot was to be fired. She would shut her small self



in grandfather's bedroom and place her fingers in her ears every time one of the executions took place. I was less sensitive and tender-hearted; and besides I was mother's assistant, and a big dinner had to be prepared and served in the best room, for this was an important season. Little sister had ever a tender spot in her heart for animals as well as folks.

Our people would have ten or fifteen head of hogs to kill; hence the early start, as they wanted to get all the porkers dressed and hung so they would be ready to take in at night. The day following the slaughter the great pile of clean meat was cut up; that is, what we reserved for our own use — the rest was taken dressed and whole into the Cincinnati market. When the meat was cut it was salted; the fine hams and shoulders were placed in salt ready to smoke a month hence, while side meat was salted and packed in a hogshead in the shed — for years this hogshead was never known to be empty. The lard was tried out and strained into big iron pots and kettles for summer use, some hundred pounds or more. I used to stand out by the big kettle and stir the boiling fat; I like to recall that, child as I was, I never let the lard burn, though I had often to pull a part of the fire out from under the kettle to keep it from doing so.

Next the sausage was made. I can remember when we had no special grinders for this, but the sausage was all cut on a hard wood block with a broadax or hatchet. This was Joe's and my job. The nicely seasoned sausage was packed in muslin bags and hung up; heads were made into head cheese and the feet were cleaned and pickled. Our mother knew how to make it all good and savory, but oh, the hard work for women that slaughter time brought! Mother usually had to have a woman to help her for the day, and this helper would go home at night well laden with spareribs, backbones, and such pieces. What heaps of doughnuts were made, and mince pies, too, when slaughter day was past; it was our annual feasting time.

A far-away incident of this season was recalled but a few years ago by my brother Joseph and me as we sat one day to-

gether in Winona, and though both were gray-headed we smiled, and then we sighed, for it had been so long ago and the chief actor had lived out the span of his years. We had heard for some time, in the secret fraternity of childhood, of our brother Will's "pigtail party." Woe unto him or her who offended the eldest in those days. Cousin Mary Jane did, and her name was stricken from the list of invited guests. I think I, too, was blackballed. While the men were at dinner on slaughter day, Brother Will, who was about twelve years old then, climbed out on the stout pole where the dressed hogs were suspended by their hind legs and cut off the tail of each for his "pigtail party." My remembrance of the outcome is not very distinct, excepting that Will's skill in roasting the tails and the opinion of his elders as to his amputations did not combine to make the party a great success, and there is yet a memory of tears and soot on our brother's face after the party was over. Sam Rogers, the hired man, declared he did not know how to apologize to the men in Cincinnati to whom he sold those tailless hogs!

All this reminds me of another experience of our childhood. Before the days of easy transportation by rail the farmers from the interior of Indiana and Ohio drove their cattle and hogs to the Cincinnati market over the worst of clay roads. It was a sight of much interest to watch a long procession of these drovers coming in solid phalanx, passing on to the city, where immense slaughter houses waited to receive them. So great a market was found for the swine of the new state of Indiana that Cincinnati came to be called "Porkopolis," and the village of Chicago to the northward was not thought of as even a rival in embryo.

I recall one day in particular when I was anxious to cross the road to go down to grandfather's old house, which had been repaired for our tenant, Anson by name. I had to wait for hours before it was safe for me to venture across, so rapidly did one great drove of hogs follow the other. The porkers came by hundreds, like a stream, rolling over Brown's hill and sliding down to our house upon the yellow clay made slippery by an autumn rain. We spoke of these Indiana drovers

as "Hoosiers." They were a stalwart race of the backwoods type, dressed in homespun, a wamus or hunting jacket of heavy home-made woolen, dyed with butternut bark; coarse woolen shirts, boots of cowhide made on ancient lasts, having peculiar pointed toes; hair long and unkempt and a general appearance of the wilderness country from which they had come.

The droves were always accompanied by the gigantic schooner of a Pennsylvania wagon, where they carried a large cribful of corn, a day's rations for each drove. I recall that once in this season there came a raw, cold day when the mud was like mortar and the big hogs were falling down in the half-frozen slush. Some of them had to be lifted by the combined force of the drovers into the Pennsylvania schooner to be carried until they could march again. It was some task to get these heavy porkers dragged up by ropes into the wagon. On this particular day, as they were passing our house the drovers discovered our big clean orchard, and as night was coming on they felt they could not take the risk of going further over such treacherous roads, so they asked if they might drive their hogs into our orchard and stay all night at our house. Father came in to talk it over with mother, for their pitiable plight touched his sympathies, and mother consented to keep the entire crowd. I should think, as well as I can remember, there must have been fifteen men in all, who were wet, muddy and tired to complete exhaustion. We built a great fire in the open fireplace, and as soon as supper was over we all went upstairs to bed and left the drovers down in the front room by the big fireplace. They dried their wet clothing; mother furnished them covers and they lay down on the floor before the fire and slept until about four o'clock the next morning, when all hands were out to feed the drove so as to get an early start. Father's corncrib furnished food for the hungry pigs.

That morning the men brought in a backlog and built a great fire, which so heated the chimney that it too caught fire. I was sleeping upstairs and was suddenly aroused by the loud roar in the chimney, and I thought the whole house was on fire; I looked out the window and found the orchard illumi-

nated and the great drove of hogs at breakfast under the trees. I snatched my little sister up in my arms and made a dash for the stairs, called excitedly to mother. She met me in the hall, took Ida, and told me what had happened. It was a bad fright, and unnerved me for a time.

I remember the starting forth once more of the ungainly procession. The Pennsylvania wagon looked like a great row boat, high in the front and rear and covered with heavy canvas. It was drawn by four horses. I saw one of the wagon masters open a small cupboard in one side of this wagon and take out a bar of resin soap, so I fancied that this same cupboard contained other things for their way. The tar bucket swung behind, and the whole ark on wheels was a picture I cannot forget. I inquire of my aged companions for the Pennsylvania wagons, and in most cases I find that even their memory has perished. The four heavy draft horses had a mounted driver upon a brass-trimmed saddle who, with horsewhip in hand, guided them. Sometimes the heavy wagon would descend into the deep ruts which had been worn in the soft mud by heavy loads; thus on the clay roads after a rain every moment must have held anxiety lest a wheel should need to be pried up. In such a case the driver would dismount and, taking a rail from the roadside fence, would summon all hands, while he shouted in stentorian tones "Get up!" and soon the ponderous load would be on solid ground again for a rod or two, when a mudhole might again appear, occupying the entire width of the road and leaving no choice but to drive straight through it. Then the driver would shout to the lead horses to go on, and on they had to go. These teamsters were obliged to keep the horses in the middle of the road and in line while always on the lookout for crossroads. A herdsman went on ahead to watch for branching roads, as hogs are pig-headed for sure, and seem to enjoy being obstinate and striking off pell-mell in the wrong direction.

As I recall these drovers and their menial task, I think that they too showed the courage and determination of other pioneers. They were men of nerve and had the spirit to triumph over discouragement and hard and disagreeable toil.

At daylight after the night they spent on our farm they moved on toward Cincinnati, eight miles away, with Mill Creek to be forded, and so Anson and some of the neighbors offered to see them over. As I remember, Anson took his horses and wagon. Mill Creek was well up and there was some difficulty in fording with the drove, as in that place the stream was quite swift. A large four-hundred-pounder, got out and was floated downstream, but Anson rescued him to despatch him on the spot and claim him as a trophy — he thought this a great prize. How different the times, how changed the life! No longer do the Hoosiers wear homespun and drive herds of swine through mud and mire for a hundred miles and more. Often the drovers slept in wet clothes on a hard floor; at home they lived in the one-room cabin of sixty years ago. Their children have good houses and know all modern comforts. True, they raise corn and hogs, but great trains bear their products to Chicago, and the rich farmers who supply pork for that great market nowadays ride in their automobiles over beautiful roads; even the name "Porkopolis" for Cincinnati, I suppose, is forgotten, and Chicago holds the princes of pork.

After grandmother died and grandfather came to live with us he used his old home for a workshop. There he had his draw shave, his planes and brace and bits, and he would spend days under the old roof constructing snares and traps for rabbits and quails. I do not remember that the traps which he constructed were a very great success, though I do recall that once father and Will brought home a couple of fine rabbits caught by these same traps. Their eyes were so bright that father, in the goodness of his heart, hated to kill them; but a hunger for fresh meat caused a vote in favor of dressing them for a roast, which was done.

Sam Rogers was our hired man then, and he was found of playing tricks on grandfather. The old man had a yellow Thomas cat of advanced age who used to sit in front of the fire and purr. After the home was broken up and our grandsire came to live with us he brought the old yellow cat along with him. The addition of "Tom" to our household was looked upon as an innovation and regarded with disfavor until we



observed the affectionate regard grandfather had for him, and then we were able to overlook the faults of the aged feline. Now our man Sam had been a quiet spectator of the history of Thomas cat and concluded that his worthless life were better ended, so one evening, after grandfather had his traps and snares well set for the night, Sam caught old Tom and knocked him in the head and then passed the noose of one of the traps around his neck, and there hung the old yellow cat, stone dead. When our grandfather found what had happened to his pet, he thought only of the success of his trap. I see him now, coming into the house swinging Tom by the tail and uttering a cry of victory in his own way: "Ooghy! Ooghy!" Later, as he sat waiting for his breakfast, he appeared in a brown study, and after a short time he very suddenly exclaimed, "Sam did it!"

Our grandfather used to take us with him on his outings. One day in October, about the year 1847, on one of those fine, frosty mornings when the sun was just peeping over Neighbor Bruin's barn, our grandsire called to Brother Joe and me to get on our thick shoes and stockings as he wanted us to gather walnuts. This request, of course, was made in the sign language. We were soon off with mother's big kettle, down by the fence and over into the field where the walnut trees grew. Ours was a most primitive way of taking off the damp, black hulls. Grandfather himself made us a pounder of iron of some weight, and in the big kettle we would pound off the hulls, or rather loosen them so that when we placed them in the sun they would dry and fall off. Thus we spread them in sunny places for a time, and then it was our job to pick the walnuts out of the hulls with our own little fingers. From morning to morning of autumn we heard the call to business, until we had bushels of fine, well-cured walnuts. These we stored in grandfather's old house or in the loft of the carriage house, and there on stormy days we cracked them on the old anvil he had brought over the mountains from "Jersey" so long before.

How well do I remember the remnant of grandfather's old orchard, where in days long before any of us were born the



trees gave him both summer and winter apples and cider for vinegar and apple butter. There in our memory still stands the "Sixty-Bushel Tree;" I believe I would recognize it to-day by the peculiar flavor of its fruit. For some time grandfather's house remained much as he had left it when the home-keeper departed from it forever. The immense fireplace in the large kitchen had still its iron crane and pothooks; grandmother's teakettle, frying pans, and other cooking utensils were stored in the pantry near by. Sometimes when I would miss grandfather from our house I would go to search for him in his old home. If it were winter time I would find him with a big fire on the ample hearth, working away with saw and plane, perhaps making a gate or again a broom; for he loved to work, even in his seventy-first year.

Our grandfather had some of the Puritanic virtues, among them a great reverence for the Sabbath day, which he pronounced "Sab-day." When left at home with us children while our parents were gone to the Carthage church, he would often reprove us for romping and shaking the house, which seemed to be so wicked that he could but rebuke us for our profanation of this sacred day. He was indeed a pious man, and read his Bible. He would recite long hymns in his own way; sometimes we could understand his meaning and sometimes not.

It was hard, even after the country was developed into a land of plenty, for the old grandsire to feel it was just the thing for us children to eat peaches and grapes without first asking permission of our parents, and even then he did not understand how we should eat all the fruit we might want. When he would find peach pits under our trees he would ask us by what authority we helped ourselves to them. We of course knew that our mother allowed this privilege and that was all the authority necessary, and yet from this distance it almost seems, when we think how much our liberty troubled him, that it would have been better to have talked it over with our parents and had a clear understanding established with him by them.

From the shady back porch where he took his seat the

orchard was in plain view, and that was his point of lookout; but on those warm days of fruitage the old man would fall asleep in his armchair. Then was our time to feast, and we would run out to the woodpile and through the weeds and grass; creeping on hands and knees we would land in the peach orchard and eat of those delicious and abundant peaches, being careful to cast the telltale pits far away. When we had eaten to satiety we would creep back to the house, and by that time grandfather would have had a good sleep and be ready for a tour of inspection in the orchard to see if we had been there foraging, and then he would come back, satisfied that the fruit was still safe, and take another nap. So the summer days went on, and in turn he watched the grapes on the porch and if he found skins upon the ground, he entered protest to mother. To keep the peace we again used strategy, and skins of those luscious grapes were seldom found by the old eyes beneath our father's grapevine.

We regret this miserly instinct of the dear old man and that we felt driven to use subterfuge, but we know now that this instinct came as a birthright to the pioneers from a stony and ungenerous soil, and even in the new land every cent was saved to spend in improving the homestead. As a result of this economy our ancestors always, no matter how hard the times, had money in the house. When it was placed in the big walnut chest to pay taxes it was not counted upon as money. As an illustration of this I recall that once father saw the money in the chest after he had heard his mother say they were out of money, whereupon the honest son spoke to his mother concerning the presence of the money in the chest; but she assured him that was not money, for it was to pay the taxes.

Many fine trees grew upon our old Walnut Tree Farm. One large sycamore tree stood just a little diagonally across the highway from the walnut tree which gave the name to our home. This noble tree was one of the last of its kind, and had stood the shocks of many fierce storms. Its shapely top and symmetrical body with many smooth, white arms reaching out in all directions made indeed a pleasant sight to the lover of forest trees. However, as it grew so near the road

and as our neighbors hauled hay to market, its spreading boughs were often in the way, and would snatch flakes of clover or timothy from their loads, so I conjecture our father thought it would be better to have the fair tree chopped down.

When it was announced that the sycamore was to be removed a new interest in forestry was created. A good day was selected, and father and the man of all work got a new rope and Anson climbed to the top of the fine tree and made it fast so we could direct its fall from below, to bring it to the exact spot where father had elected that it should descend. Then the two men began to chop it down, while we children got hold of the rope and ran as far from the tree as it would allow. When we heard the cracking and snapping of the old monarch and saw the heavy top swaying and tossing its plummy head, Anson left father in charge of the tree while he ran to our aid. A half-dozen strokes from father's axe and the great sycamore lay before us, a fallen giant. It was fine fun for us children then. We took possession of the situation and began to romp over the tree, teetering and climbing from one limb to another until we were satisfied, while father and his man began to trim the branches and with crosscut saw to dismember the prostrate sycamore. When the limbs had been severed from the trunk it was taken to a near-by sawmill, and the lumber from it was used by father to make a fence for the front yard, reaching from the gate to Aunt Isabelle's corner; this was a great improvement. The wood from the top did good service as backlogs and stove wood.

Grandfather was an onlooker during the destruction of the giant tree, and in some of the smoothest round limbs he saw a future little wagon which he was planning to make for us children. Father cut off the suitable limbs and grandfather carried them down to the workshop in his old house and began to fashion the wagon, in which we all took an interest until it was finally completed. Our grandfather had reached the point when aged people usually consider they are too infirm to work, but this was not easy for one who through a long life had loved to be employed. When we recall his loss of hearing we do not wonder that his mental powers longed for

food, and since he had the sense of sight he was eager to use it in work that brought results; so it is that we find him at the advanced age of eighty making brooms to sell in the market or doing some work in the shop at his old house. In his later years there is no doubt but the memory of his active life came to him — the days when his first-born son, Joseph, worked with him in clearing land and in all the toil of the farm; when he himself, like his son, was full of life's activities — and so he told us how he longed to visit this child of his love, declaring in his own language that he loved "Josie most."

Understanding his desire, father arranged to take him to the town of Morrow, Ohio, to spend the summer, where he was planning to make brooms. Tradition tells us that he made a thousand that summer, though I have scarcely dared to rehearse the story, as it seemed to me so incredible. He at this time was in his eightieth year. He had invented a broom machine, and we will venture to assert that this might have facilitated the work. He took much pride in the durability and strength of his work, showing by contrast the difference between good honest work and the poor slipshod work of the careless.

His return from Uncle Joseph's is still a pleasing memory. Even before the long carpetbag was unloaded he began to tell us of the greatest experience of his life. As Uncle Joseph was too busy to bring grandfather home he took him to the town of Morrow to send him back on the train. He gave the conductor a letter telling of grandfather's deafness. The conductor wrote some instructions for the old man, rules of conduct upon the train. He was not to place his head out of the window, nor his hand, lest he find his hand left outside or his head badly bruised, so swiftly did the "steam wagon" move. As this was his first ride on the cars, and being alone it was an occasion of moment with him, and it is no wonder that the narration of his experience excited him greatly. While upon this visit he had been much interested in the power of steam, and had thought out how to fashion our little wagon after the pattern of a handcar used by section hands, which he noted was propelled by levers. This resulted in the little



## CHAPTER VII

### OUR SPRINGTIME



THE early days of March bring to southern Ohio freeze and thaw in close succession. There is a certain day, March 2, 1844, the weather of which I well remember, though I was not six years old at the time. It was during the visit of Cousin Mary Jane Skinner and a rainy afternoon when our parents decided to fulfil a promise to us of some standing. This took us children, then three in number, and Cousin Mary Jane to spend the night at our neighbor VanZandt's. It was something out of the ordinary for us to make a visit of this duration. To be with the large family of VanZandt children for any time was an event to be anticipated, and the four of us went with joy.

We stayed not only that night but into the afternoon of the next day, March 3, when father came over and announced the birth of a fine little daughter, our sister. It took but a moment for us to get on our coats and wraps and start for home. The rain of the day before had been checked by a cold wave; the mud had frozen and the walking was very rough. Our eagerness to see the little sister sent us with all haste down the road, breaking through the deep horse tracks, mud and water flying over shoes and stockings and up on coats and dresses; but what cared we — a wonder and a gladness awaited us at home! Upon the arrival we found some good neighbor women still



Εργασίην κενύσῃ  
 Τί; τί τέχνης κεν;  
 Ἐωσμένῃ δ' αἶ  
 Τὸν δεσποτὴν ἐκτίμος;  
 Τίς εἰς; τί σου μέλει;  
 Λαμβανόμεναι πρὸς τὴν  
 Τὴν μεγάλην, σφοδρὰ  
 Κίχας <sup>μὲν</sup> εὐδαίμων;  
 Ὁ δεσποτὴς μετὰ δὲ  
 Ὡς τὴν ἀμαζαντήσῃ.  
 Ἐδοκε μετὰ Λογισῇ  
 Ὁ αὐτὸς μοι ἀδελφούς  
 Κατεκτενεύει καὶ μικρούς.  
 Φυλακὰ μετὰ καὶ οὐσί  
 Ἐπὶ δὲ εὐφραύτον  
 Διηκουσθὲν αὐτοῖς.  
 Ἐγὼ δὲ σὺν δεσποτῇ  
 Οἰκέω οἰκέω καλῇ  
 Εὐδαίμωνι δὲ μαύτῃ  
 Οὐτὰ μετὰ δὲ καλῇ

William's Greek Poem in Memory of Trippie





lingering and ministering to our mother. Julia Bruin, as nurse, gave signals indicating that we were to keep quiet as we neared the door of mother's room. We went in on tiptoe, to find mother in the "big high bed" and little sister in the rocking chair on a pillow. Here we three, Will and little Joe and I, knelt down as close to the baby as we could get to wonder and admire. First we looked into the bright blue eyes, next we examined the dear little hands and feet and the round, fuzzy head, turning to our mother with many expressions of love and admiration. At this time, too, the dear mother told us the little one was to be the support and solace of her age — as she expressed it, her "bunch of comfort."

The springtime was ever beautiful in our southern Ohio home, and this one was especially so to me. I was but six years old, but I have the most distinct memory of my morning task, which was to put my sweet baby sister to sleep. The only cradle was our grandfather's old wooden settee decorated with cornucopias of roses, brought from his own home and valued accordingly; but nothing was too good for "Maggie," as he called our baby. A board was placed half-way down one side to keep her from rolling out, while I sat at the foot and kept the settee rocking, for it was upon rockers. It was a pleasant task to sit there and sway back and forth on the seat with my little charge and watch the round baby face on the pillow, or I could look away through the south windows down the long green aisles of the orchard, where the trees were now scattering their petals like newly fallen snow. With what freshness were those spring mornings filled! The birds had returned, the sunshine swept through clarified atmosphere and the odors of the springtime crept in everywhere. The lilac by the cistern was in bloom; the snowball bush was bending with a wealth of fluffy white blossoms — oh, what riches we found in this old home! It was all the world we knew, and enough to fill our hearts to overflowing.

The year 1844 held not only the birth of our little sister and the death of grandmother, but it brought us the visit of Cousin Mary Jane Skinner. Her mother was a Scudder, and father's cousin; she had died a short time previously, and Mary

Jane's father asked to leave his little motherless daughter in our home for a time. Our grandmother was interested in her niece, and we were delighted with the idea of having another playmate. While she was but ten years old we were all younger than she. Small girl as I was, I clearly remember her arrival with her father. She had a little hair trunk, hiding what mysteries! With eagerness we awaited its opening. I was most curious to see what it contained, and when it was opened the disclosures were beyond expectation. There was a doll, with bonnets and dresses — how beautiful the bonnets seemed to me; and this lady doll had even a cap such as dames wore in those long-ago days, and the whole of her miniature wardrobe showed that it had been designed by a person of skill and taste. There was a wonderful picture book, too, in which there was a picture of a finely dressed girl called by Mary Jane "my Sister Caroline." A handsome youth she told me was "Clark," her brother. I noticed she carried her arm in a sling, and to be sure we were all interested in finding out the cause. We learned that coming down on the Ohio River she had fallen from her berth and broken her arm.

An incident of her first days with us displays one of her characteristics. It was a warm evening in spring and we were playing in the yard. As we looked down into the orchard through the deepening twilight we discovered a swarm of "lightning bugs." At once Cousin Mary Jane called to us to follow, and away we all scampered to catch the little glowing lights and bottle them for our firefly lamps. Our cousin brushed us aside, telling us she was older and taller than any of us, and I remember to have felt a little crestfallen that everybody seemed a little older and taller than myself.

Our cousin seemed to enjoy our life on the farm. In the evenings we used to hunt eggs in the barn and in the out-buildings of our grandfather. This was an exciting play, for by the dozens we found the pearly fresh eggs in straw and hay mows, in boxes and bins, and it was great fun. Before Easter we hid a store to color. Some of them we tightly wrapped in calico and boiled to get the prints on the shells, or we colored them with onion skins, catnip and other home-

made dyes. The novelty of our farm life appealed to our town cousin, and she entered into everything with spirit, from playing hide-and-seek in the barn to romping in the orchard. After the lapse of more than threescore years what a quaint little maiden comes back to me as I recall with strange vividness our Cousin Mary Jane. Thick dark hair about the sparkling young face; vivacity in every movement, whether catching fireflies or dancing down to the barnyard to see the goslings; even her little round ruffled aprons glimpse across my memory.

I cannot remember just how long Mary Jane was with us, but it must have been for the greater part of a year. When the time came to pack the little hair trunk we all stood about again. The Scudder relatives in Cincinnati, as I remember, had given her many nice presents, and it was a problem how they were all to be stowed away in that one little trunk, which seemed full to overflowing without them. Finally, however, close packing and a rope prepared the trunk for shipping without immediate danger of its exploding. The picture book must long ago have disappeared, but one of its stanzas or a fragment of one still clings to my memory:

With books and work and healthful play  
Let your first years be spent—

The little trunk has passed away; I never saw another like it until, many years later, I found at Mount Vernon in the bedroom of George Washington, at the foot of the high posted bed, the mate to the little hair trunk of our cousin. How long the days seemed after she went away; we children felt quite lost without her. About that time a neighbor asked me how long Mary Jane had been gone, and I replied that it had been a very long time, when in reality it had been about two weeks.

Of the four children, Ida was youngest and best beloved. She was called "Blue-eyed-a" at first, from the color of her eyes; the name shortened to "Ida" while her middle name remained "Louisa." Her tenderness and delicacy were always appealing to her more sturdy brothers, so Will and Joe were usually ready to concede to her small requests. She soon out-

grew the settee and could be led by the hand, becoming the companion of our rambles through field and wood. I remember how Brother Will used to delight to carry this dear child "poose back," or strip off her shoes and stockings to make in the dusty road the print of her little feet, for they looked "so cunning." Her heart was always a fountain of love; nothing grieved her more than to have the boys punished. She would, on such necessary occasions, become greatly excited and flushed of face, while with tears and entreaties she begged mother to throw away the whip. Sometimes she would even bite mother's dress while she was punishing the boys, so aroused would she become. I always believed the boys were spared many a whipping on account of her tearful pleading in their behalf. Often have I taken her out to the orchard when it was necessary for them to be taken through "a course of sprouts."

Sister Ida recalls her one whipping, as I do the sympathy I gave her at the time. Our mother had the greatest dislike to what we called by-words in those days, now slang. Indeed she was most precise in her language, using the clearest, most exact English — the result of those girlhood days when she was determined to *know*. The boys of our family took to all the slang of the time with amazing facility, and the little sister was a mimic. One expression on the forbidden list was "Dog on it!" One day something aroused the little girl's deep indignation and out came the prohibited expletive. When our mother attached the penalty she did not expect the first offender to be her baby; supposedly it would be William or, perhaps, Joseph.

The little maiden was taken to the north porch downstairs (the boys were accustomed to receive their punishments on the side porch upstairs, but Ida was marched out upon the downstairs porch), and I hid in dismay behind the ash-barrel while the awful deed was being performed. First mother washed the round face and the dirty, chubby, little hands; next she combed her precious culprit's hair and braided the little pigtails, and last of all laid the baby across her knee and spanked her.

The moment the punishment was over away flew little

sister in the direction of the ash-barrel, where I was secreted, and, as she told me but yesterday, was "cuddled and comforted" to her heart's content in my arms. That was the first and last punishment for the baby; we older ones kept no record of ours for obvious reasons — they would have loaded our memories somewhat! One punishment for which Brother Will fortified himself with our help I have not forgotten. As usual on such occasions, he was remanded to the upstairs porch, and at the foot of the stairs it was noticeable that he was seized with a strange inability to ascend. In order to explain his difficulty I must ask the privilege of digressing. Brother William was a bright and intelligent child with a great deal of spirit, and he easily devised ways of teasing us younger ones, who were more sensitive and usually unable to reply to his sallies of wit. We all loved and admired our elder brother, but he was more boisterous than we and led us into many an hilarious game we would not of ourselves have invented. Often from the shade of our walnut tree on a hot afternoon of summer would come the warwhoop of our contending parties as with wooden swords or daggers we fought our mimic battles.

When our cries reached mother's ears she would arrest her rioting children, and was sometimes obliged to mete out summary punishment to the leaders. One Sunday afternoon it happened that she was thus disturbed in her reading: wild shouts and the sound of scuffling rent the peaceful air. We were dispersed, but the punishment of the chief offender, Brother Will, was postponed until Monday, such a scene not befitting Sunday. On Monday mother was in an upper room opening out on that side porch of destiny. In this room the court was to be held that day; there the culprit was to meet her at an appointed hour, when his case would be investigated and proper punishment administered. Father was not at home, but in any event it usually fell to our dispassionate mother to punish us children. Will prepared himself for trial in an unbecomingly hilarious mood. The rest of us were taken into the secret and went with him to the woodpile, where he got some hickory splints and we helped him to prepare an



armor. We built this defense by slipping the splints inside his trousers, which were thin summer ones.

Of course it was fun, and Brother Joe and I helped the culprit upstairs, the ascent of which was no small task for our big brother on account of his exceeding stiffness of limb. His rear view was ridiculous in the extreme, and we all came into the room laughing. Seeing our poorly suppressed merriment mother said: "Children, you should be sorry your brother has to be punished for being bad." She then ordered him to stand still and with a good-sized water sprout from the near-by orchard she struck him a sharp blow. Of course the whip broke, and our mother saw there was a trick. Over her usually serene countenance a quiet smile rippled and she opened the door and pushed her son out on the porch. I do not recall that we ever willfully disobeyed our parents, although from our attacks of overflowing spirits and many skirmishes with brooms and fights with pillows, we had sometimes to be called down.

All natural children like p  ts, but little sister's devotion to them was marked. Dogs, squirrels, pet chickens, — all came in for their share of love and mourning when tragic death claimed them. Our first little puppy was a rat terrier, a dear little pet — fat, buff-colored, with bandy legs and a white cross on his breast and forward legs. A family living north of us had a nest of that breed, and as father was tormented with rats and mice about the barn and corncrib, mother gave her consent to having this dog, who was warranted to slay and destroy rats by the wholesale. So it was that our parents got into the carriage one day and made a visit, and at evening they were to return with puppy. Time crept on while we watched the clock till the going down of the sun came, and still we kept watch as long as we could see, and then we listened for the rumbling of the wheels. When we heard that sound we rushed for the gate. There we met mother with our pet, which we received with cries of delight. Mother told how quietly doggie had slept in her lap. We warmed milk for him and fed little "Buffie," as we called him. We made him a warm nest in a box by the fire, but long before day he wakened

us all with his insistent "Ki-yi!" I sprang from the trundle-bed to open the fire and warm some milk for him.

How we loved this pet! Little sister was all devotion, and carried him about in her arms. A short time after this he followed Joe into the orchard, where the hogs were kept. Small as was Buffie, the pigs became much excited and began to raise the bristles on their backs; and the hired man saw it might be dangerous for the doggie, and gave him a toss upon the haystack. But Buffie did not like his perch and slid down to violent death. Thus ended the tragic story of Buffie, whose short life had given us unalloyed happiness.

There was also Watchie, who was much beloved and grew to be a watch dog in spite of the accidents of his youth. Little Ida carried him about the most of the time in her plump baby arms out of sympathy for his uncertain little legs. One day she fell down on him and dislocated his shoulder, so that he was always a little lame. When he was grown father used to take him to the city to watch the load, and he was generally considered "the cutest dog in the world." He always followed the boys to market. One time they did not wish that he should be obliged to get wet swimming Mill Creek, so they indulgently lifted him into the wagon. When in midstream he jumped out, joyously took a bath, and then swam to shore; Watchie knew just what he wanted.

Once this same dog got lost on College Hill when he had been with Brother Joe to the wood market in the city. About a week later, when Will was coming home from College Hill, a yellow dog barked at him much like our Watchie. Will knelt and patted his knee, calling "Watchie" in the familiar manner and the dog came bounding — it was indeed Watchie, overjoyed to find one of his young masters. Will gave the woman of the house something for feeding our truant dog and brought him home in triumph, where he was accorded a glad welcome.

We had a little white, woolly poodle, with eyes that Anson called "burnt holes in a blanket." He contracted fleas, which greatly annoyed our little sister, for the bites were almost as bad as bee stings on her tender flesh and she did want to pet

him, he was so soft and woolly. We named him Trippie. Mother tried to give him back to the man who had presented him to us, and Trippie was even in his wagon, when Ida threw her small self on the ground and rolled in agony, begging and pleading for the return of Trippie, fleas and all. There was nothing for mother to do but to take him out of the wagon and restore him to the little flea-bitten arms. Later Ida reasoned it out that it really did not pay to suffer thus for Trippie and she finally consented to his being given away. Brother Will was studying Greek at that time, and he wrote a poem in that classic language to immortalize Trippie.

One dog we had was not a pet. Father bought him for a watch dog, and he was so fierce he had to be kept chained at the barn all the time. He was purchased to keep away thieves, and was described by our boys as "Old Bose, jocose, morose!" The latter, I might state, was true, while the other adjective was simply for euphony and rhyme. When loosed at night he got to wandering, and poison took him, although it required two doses, for he outlived one placed by some one in the vicinity whom he must have troubled. We had cats and dear little kittens and little fish in the cistern. I rather think mother composed the rhyme we heard on many a summer morning:

Get up, little sister, the morning is bright,  
The birds are all singing to welcome the light,  
The fishes are swimming the cistern quite through;  
Get up, little sister, there's something to do!

The days of springtime are so sweet that I would linger here and fancy the sound of our mother's voice as we rolled from our trundle-bed to begin the bright days. Sometimes we were up and off for the meadow and down by the brook where Father and Mother Goose were accustomed to lead their flock of little ones to nip the tender blades of grass and swim in the brook. I think of all pets none were so dear to little sister as the yellow goslings. "'Ak 'od, see dossie!" (Walk road, see goslings) was a familiar watchword of hers. I think if I could have been persuaded to take a lunch, she would have been willing to follow all day long that flock of green and yellow goslings. How hot we used to get trailing through

the meadow in the wake of the old goose and her fascinating flock! Later a prickly little body was soused in the rain barrel to soothe the overheated follower of goslings.

One of our favorite resorts was the old barn built by our grandfather in 1812. To our young minds it was a marvel of ever changing interest. It was our gymnasium, where to drop from a lofty beam to the mow below was an exciting feat, and where our performances had danger's thrill; for instance, once I was walking a bridge made of pitchforks covered with hay when they came apart and I descended with violence, unfortunately upon a poor little kitten of a new batch living there. Another acrobatic feat risked Ida's little bones. She and Joe were playing "Hide and Whoop," and she was searching for him in the mow but was not successful, so she said: "I just don't believe you are up here at all!" Utter silence greeted her, so she continued, "If you are up here I'll just jump off this loft!" Gleefully he sprang up from the hay at once, and the plucky little sister gathered herself together and jumped, landing on that old rail floor below where the covering of hay was very thin and jarring herself most terribly.

The open space at the rear of the barn was a nice place for mother's geese. On St. Valentine's day they, with great propriety, chose their mates, and two by two they would walk proudly under the barn and make their nests. Will would creep under a little later and on hands and knees would look for eggs, which he found covered up with softest down. These he brought out in his cap. After a while, however, we left them to hatch in those soft nests whose lining the mother goose had plucked from her own breast, and then we waited for the signal of the old gander and the appearance of Mother Goose with her soft, downy brood. She headed at once for the pond to give her children their first bath, and they acted much better than human young on similar occasions. Once when Will was under the barn he found the little wagon grandfather had made for him, to which he had tried to add a propeller, as such wagons have now. This is the little wagon of which I wrote in a previous chapter. It happened that later grandfather, having become offended with "Billigee," had hidden

away under the barn the much prized wagon, so this was a lucky find for the boy.

After grandmother died grandfather came to live with us, but his poultry chose to remain at the old place, the hens selecting the back kitchen and the cellar house, while a very noisy flock of guineas occupied the trees. These fowls came in for a large share of our attention. What fun it was to find the guineas' nests, as a number of hens laid their eggs in the same nest, so that usually when we found them they would be rounded up with eggs. It was indeed a victory to discover one hidden away with great skill amongst the giant trumpet weeds of the old neglected garden.

One day while we were merrily counting our finds and Mary Jane was lifting our little brother Joe through the back window of the old deserted kitchen, an accident occurred we can never forget. Little Joe was gnawing bark from a sassafras root at the time, when he suddenly cried out that the root had pierced his eye. Father and the hired man, who were doing chores at the barn, ran over, and upon examination they discovered a small puncture in his right eye. The little three-year-old was not allowed to cry or rub the injured eye. Mother from her home medicine drawer was the doctor. She stirred up a poultice of well-pulverized slippery elm, bandaged his eyes, and darkened the front room, while father made haste to consult an oculist in Cincinnati. The physician told father that all was being done that could be in such a case, so mother remained in the dark room with her child to keep him company and entertain him, as well as to see that the poultices were changed and the light kept from his eye.

This accident happened in our little brother's busy season. He had been making hay out in the front yard for his special calf, and was taking care of it as fast as it was dry enough. He had a box with a heavy twine string attached, and with this appliance he had hauled a number of loads. He ordered Brother Will and me to see that his hay was properly cared for. We delivered it in his dark room, and there the little fellow would examine his load, stooping down to feel of both load and box; and I can yet remember that, blindfolded as



he was, he told us that we did not give him good measure. The omission we would hasten to correct.

The doctor told father if we could keep down the inflammation we might remove the poultices, if I mistake not, in about ten days, and so our dear mother watched him day and night until danger was past. The injury left a small white scar on the iris of his right eye, and while there was some difference in the sight of the two eyes I have never heard that it was so appreciable as to cause our brother inconvenience. For this escape our parents were most thankful.

I remember yet a storm of early spring, though I have seen so many springs of sunshine and storm. The day had been unseasonably warm, and the depressing heat foretold a thunderstorm. Soon it came on, with high wind and vivid flashes of lightning, followed by deep peals of thunder which kept up a continued cannonading for half an hour or more. We felt safe on our feathers, with beds moved out from the wall, and slept the sleep of childhood save when an occasional heavy crash startled us. Our younger brother was, however, made very nervous by these sudden thunderstorms in the night, and often above the roar of the wind and the sound of the beating rain I would hear him calling to mother or see him standing by her bed for comfort. The dear mother always sympathized with us in our fears, and sought to give us courage and inspire confidence without making light of our timidity.

After the storm of which I speak, we found that the coming of the morning had brought the springtime; and we went forth into the fields to see the results of this fierce conflict that had gone on in the night between winter and spring. Everywhere on branch and ground buds were expanding; the hard ground about the daffodils and snowdrops had been softened and there they were, ready to show their buds and, in but a day or two, their sweet blossoms. The peach trees were in bud, and soon they too were in full bloom, their fragrant pinkness followed by the delicate tinting of apple and cherry blossoms. In the midst of this rare draping the birds were making the air vocal with their sweet melody; redbirds meadowlarks, robins, bluebirds, orioles, and wild canaries —



I often wonder where they are all gone. In our childhood, after a heavy rain, when the orchard trees were in fresh bloom the bird concert was the finest of the season. Where now are those singing companies that used to come on swift wing each spring?

We looked forward to the time of bird and blossom through all the tedious winter, though that season, too, had its diversions. The slopes and little hills about us, when covered with snow, made fine coasting places. While chopping, father once found a crooked branch in the woods just suitable to make sled runners for us. When it was completed, what a wealth of happy hours that sled brought us! It was fine for hauling in backlogs and stove wood, turning work into play. How happy the boys were when they had the rick of wood on the back porch, for after that, the coasting! It was not always good coasting, for those southern Ohio winters were quite open; the snow often melted as it fell, and again it went off with rain and flood and the water would stand on the surface some three or four inches deep. Rubber overshoes were in those days almost unknown, and wet feet were the rule when people had to go abroad. We wore heavy shoes and picked our way, crossing fences and bridging little swollen rills with chunks or stones. Small wonder that we looked forward with eagerness to the springtime.

Toward the close of winter we grew very weary of cold and snow, and the return of outdoor freedom became the topic of many a conversation. On dark and stormy days, when driving wind and rain made sad music on the roof, we called on our mother for "Story Spring." To add more cheer we built a blazing fire upon the hearth, and all drew near to hear our mother tell in her own interesting manner of the happy time when we could be out-of-doors beside the little brook watching for crayfish and minnows, or in the woods searching for signs of Nature's awaking, which has held its old charm for us through all the years, even to the time of life's winter. This spring my own grandchild searched as eagerly as we in the ravine across from her Minnesota home. As dear

to her as they were to us in the long ago are the first little spring blossoms pushing through the leaf mold.

There was always more or less of mystery for us about the migration of birds and their return over the pathless fields of air to the same spot on each recurring spring, where they would announce their arrival with their own peculiar call. "Phœ-be! Phœ-be!" was enough to start a whole family from the breakfast table to the front porch, where for years the same announcement had been made in early spring ever since we children could remember. For this reason mother would usually begin "Story Spring" with the return of Phœbe bird; next she pictured for our imaginations the unfolding of the first of our garden flowers — daffodils, snowdrops, and delicate narcissus, then the springing in the woods of violets and spring beauties, and the leafing out of forest trees and the coming of bloom to the orchard; and next with sweet words she painted the return of the birds, till we could almost hear their concert down in the south orchard.

At last these pretty stories were a reality. The birds began their musical festival in the dear old orchard south of the house which sloped down into that south field of ours, broken by many a little wet weather branch where, as soon as it was warm, we delighted to wade. There, too, our brothers found little cascades where they set their overshot wheels which gave them such pleasing results. These mimic mills gave them the same kind of happiness that a water mill gives to a grown man. Romps in the barn, "hide and seek," cracking walnuts and hickory nuts and popping corn were not the only recreations now — we were out and away!

I remember a large undertaking of one spring, at least for as very young people as we. It was to open a sugar camp all by ourselves. Down by the big spring was a small grove of maple trees where once upon a time our people had had a camp and made syrup. Brother William was a large, strong boy of perhaps twelve, I was ten and Joe was seven, while Ida was almost too young to share in this enterprise as to the work, but she went with us. The first thing to do was to look

up the troughs, which were found scattered over the ground. We cleaned them, scrubbing them thoroughly at the near-by spring. Next we gathered an armload of elder brush, and with a hot poker burned out the pith and got spiles ready to conduct off the sap into the troughs and pans, for we had made a draft on our mother's pantry. When we had everything ready and mother's big kettle hauled down to the camp, we set the posts, and had a strong lug-pole and chain fixed and placed the ten-gallon kettle on the hook. Brother Will bored holes in the maple trees and drove in the spiles, and when the favorable day came the sap began to drip, and with joy we started to carry the sugar water in pails to the waiting kettle.

Brother Joe and I would drag up "crow's nest," and having previously secured kindling from dried twigs, we would start the fire ablaze — "crow's nest" was the dried tops of felled trees and made a brisk fire. How the kettle boiled and the creamy foam arose! This we would skim and throw the scum in the ashes. Oh, but we were busy and happy! At noon we took turns in watching the camp. We worked like beavers, and our exertions made even our plain food very appetizing. How anxiously we looked forward to our first stirring-off, which was to be done in the kitchen under mother's direction. It was a happy day when we carried home our first pail of syrup. Mother felt the tension of our excitement and banished us from her domain while she boiled the syrup down, promising to call us when it was done, which she did; and then and there we stirred off what I still think was the best maple sugar I ever tasted. We saved it for sweetening our crust coffee, and later we dug sassafras and boiled the bark in the sugar water, which gave it a fine flavor.

True, we did eat some of the first sugaring-off, but you must not forget that the time had little of luxury in our childhood, and perhaps for that reason we enjoyed the little the more. It was not all smooth sailing in our little camp; we would rely on a spring freeze to make a good flow of sap, but at such a time, when we went down to open camp and begin gathering sugar water, perhaps after one round the wind would begin to shake the treetops and we would see the drops falling

into the troughs at long intervals and at last cease. This was a signal to cover the fire and leave the camp until another freeze — there was nothing else to do but to take what water we had boiled down and start for home. Again would come a hard rain and fill our troughs with water, spoiling the sap which had already collected there so we would have to turn over the troughs till the rain had stopped.

One time, rather late, we had a fine freeze and a great run of sugar water; it dropped down from the spiles in almost a stream, keeping us each busy every moment, as we had to boil the sap down rapidly in order to keep from loss. When night came we must have had two pails of almost molasses. We had worked so hard all day that I suppose we were too tired when night came to carry it home, so we left it in a sheltered place in the camp until morning. When we hastened back early to complete our work, we found that the neighbor boys who had been scouting around on the day of the good run had discovered our syrup in the camp and had enjoyed a fine sugaring off while we were asleep. This was the greater disappointment, as spring was at hand and swelling buds told us that the season for making good syrup was over; all we could do was to turn our troughs over and take the kettle and mother's crocks and pans home with very sore young feelings, and though the years have come and gone and brought far greater disappointments, yet the memory of this one pricks me still.

Cook's Woods was one of the favorite playgrounds of our childhood. It took its name from the owner of that fine strip of native forest two miles long by about three miles wide. In the center of its deep shade a woodman had built a cabin and had begun to cut and cord wood for market; this small opening was the only one in all this dark old forest. One of the pleasures of our brother Joe and of us two sisters was to go exploring in Cook's Woods in springtime with some of our young friends. I remember we were always hunting for new flowers. On one of these occasions when Ida and I were alone, we strayed a little too far from the usual path and found ourselves in a new and strange part of the woods. We had entirely lost our bearings and were out of sight of an opening

which had always marked for us our position. When little sister thought we were lost her dear little body trembled with fright. To be lost in the deep wilderness and perhaps have to sleep far from our home and dear mother all came to her imagination as a dreadful experience. I remember how I clasped the sweet child in my arms and tried to encourage her, while attempting to keep myself quiet so I would not lose what little I knew of direction, as with tearful eyes I searched for a way out. As I looked for the thinnest shade I discovered a rail fence made by one of our neighbors, and then I knew where we were, and tears soon ceased to blind our eyes as we began to gather flowers and mosses again; but we did not take any more ventures outside our landmarks.

We had great confidence in our brothers, and when they were with us we would venture down into some dark ravines where alone we would not go. While out one day we found some lovely flowers to which we had never been introduced. They grew in great bunches loaded with the most beautiful sky-blue and lavender flowers. We just shouted for joy, and gathered both flower and root. I think a peck measure would scarcely cover a clump of these lovely blossoms; they grew by a brooklet and were daintily mirrored there. I planted the bunch on the north side of a picket fence, where they grew for some years, always giving us pleasure. I sent a bunch over to Farmers' College that the blossoms might be analyzed, and a young botanist examined them and gave to them the commonly accepted name of harebell and told us they were quite rare.

While on one of our walks in Cook's Woods we discovered at the foot of a hill some mossy stones looking like head- and footstones of some old grave. As there were some old trees near the mound we thought it might mean hidden treasure. There seemed to our imagination to be an air of mystery about the place, which might refer to the time when early explorers buried their treasures. When we went home we reported the find, and the fact was mentioned that people of that day had not ceased to talk of Captain Kidd and his buried treasure; and it is true that once in a while some one did find, under a



stump or the spur of an oak, a pile of money. So one night our boys did sally forth with shovels on their shoulders to dig for buried treasure by the mysterious stones. To be sure, they went believing it was scarcely probable that they would find anything; and they kept their fruitless adventures a secret, to be laughed over only in the privacy of our own family.

Some time in 1850 the subject of Sunday schools was claiming much attention. Father had read of the great work being done in England and of the philanthropic work inaugurated by one of the advance guard of Christian workers who suggested the plan of getting each child to bring a penny a Sunday, and that out of these united small offerings a great and successful work might be carried on. This report so enthused our father that he took us all down to Carthage, and in a nice little speech told the Sunday school what could be accomplished if each one gave a penny a Sunday, and it was decided that we would try the plan in our school. It was a success and was continued. Sunday schools at that time were conducted very differently from now. We just read our New Testament lesson and recited our verses. A reward was offered for the one who in a given time should have the largest number of verses committed to memory. It is almost needless to say that Brother Will outdistanced even those pupils who recited hundreds of Bible verses at one recitation. In the Sunday school there was a widow's son, a bright boy who came near to Will in the number of verses he could recite. I remember that when the time to close the contest was very near, the superintendent came to father and laid the case before him, asking how it would do for Will to drop out so that the widow's son might gain the coveted prize. Brother was just beginning to assume the dignity of young manhood, and this request he felt to be almost a reflection on his own manliness. He resigned in favor of the poor boy, but always felt the injustice of the request.

Carthage, where we went to church, was three miles off, and the way was all down hill. To shorten the distance to Sunday school the boys found a way to reach the place by a cut across the fields until we could enter Cook's Woods. The



solitude of this primeval forest always held new pleasures for us. Oh, those Sunday mornings in spring! To use the language of another:

Oh, show me a place like the wildwood home,  
Where the air is fragrant and free,  
Where the first pure breath of morning comes  
With a gush of melody;  
Where noon lies down in the breezy shade  
Of the glorious forest bowers,  
And the little birds from a sunny glade  
Sit nodding among the flowers!

Our mother wanted us to go to Sunday school, so on Sunday morning, despite the labors of the week, she would be up earlier than usual in order to get us off in good time. Saturday night we were bathed, our shoes blacked, and our clean clothing laid out. It seems to me I never saw such fine spring mornings as came to us in the dear home of our childhood. As our farm was largely devoted to dairy business, there was much to be done. The milking in our home's economy was always supposed to be the duty of the men folk, while after it was brought to the house the care of the milk belonged to the women — straining, skimming, emptying and washing crocks was for the women and girls. As this took much time in the morning, it was decided that on Sunday mornings we children should go to our nine o'clock Sunday school as soon as breakfast was over; and so we would start over the field and, striking Cook's Woods, take a path which led down an inclined plane for two miles to the valley of the Mill Creek, where there was an iron suspension bridge. After crossing this we struck a nice smooth sidewalk up to the town, where we found other children flocking to Sunday school. It was quite a little journey for us, and sometimes we were footsore from our Sunday slippers having barked our heels.

I do not think we were ever late to Sunday school. About eleven o'clock was the meeting hour, and father and mother came down in the carriage, so we rode home, arriving about two o'clock, very hungry, as you will know. You will also believe that Sunday was one of the busiest days in the week,

but in childhood it does not take long to rest. As soon as our dinner was over we went to our rooms and took a nap, waking up in time to spend a while in the grapevine swing under the walnut tree, watching the city people as they came out into the country for the fresh air. The procession of fine carriages and hacks would keep up during the pleasant weather all Sunday afternoon and lent an added interest to country life.

It is true that we could not be regular in our attendance at Carthage; often heat or storms would prevent, so when a good Methodist brother named George Raymond came from Dayton and announced a Sunday school in our neighborhood, the children came from all about and took up the work with vim, and it was a great success. George Raymond was a good worker and could lead the singing. Before we got money to buy hymn-books he taught us hymns and tunes, so we got on well. One was:

Morn amid the mountains, lovely solitude,  
Gushing streams and fountains echo: God is good!

Some good man had built, before our memory, a free church, so we had a suitable house in which to meet. George Raymond was the son of old Mr. Raymond, our neighbor, a true Christian philanthropist doing his old neighborhood good, and sorry were we all when he returned to Dayton.

Before I leave the days of our childhood I wish to speak of our uncle Robert Utter, our grandmother's first-born, the son of her first husband. We all loved Uncle Robert and his good wife, Susan Van Winkle. Their visits to our home were occasions of delight to us all. They lived on the White River in Indiana and came over to visit our grandparents. There was always a close feeling of relationship between the Utter and Watkins branches. Through all our early years their annual visits were anticipated. There comes to me the memory of a pleasant summer day long ago when we children were out at recess playing. As we looked down the road we saw a covered wagon approaching, and at once all hands made a line along the roadside to take a look at the strange

sight — a wagon with letters written upon the cover. The brightest of the children told at sight that there were upon both sides the words "Free Soil." How we did wonder at the expression, but concluded it had a political meaning.

When the occupants of the wagon saw us all lined up, they looked pleased as they passed on. When school was out that day we ran home, to find that same "Free Soil" wagon in our yard under the walnut tree. On entering the house there were Uncle Robert Utter and Aunt Susan, their daughter Araminta Butterfield and Dr. Butterfield, and their grandson Webster Butterfield. Oh, what a happy event! Uncle Robert told us that during their journey they had on two occasions been refused a night's lodging because of their "Free Soil" advertisement.

Our cousin, William Utter, was the other child of Uncle Robert and Aunt Susan, but he was so near the age of our father that we always called him "Uncle" William. His wife was a daughter of Samuel Rogers of Kentucky, and our parents liked to recall that they introduced Uncle William to Elvira Rogers. Indeed, it is a well-known family tradition that while William Utter was employed in the construction of the first railroad built in Indiana he wrote a jesting letter to his uncle, our father, suggesting that he should select him a wife. This father proceeded to do in the person of Elvira Rogers of New Antioch, Ohio. When Uncle William saw her he promptly made the choice his own. He had often come with them upon these trips; but this time Cousin Araminta and her family were with them, which was an unusual pleasure.

It had been a custom of years for these good Utter relatives to make us this visit. They would prepare for their tour by getting out the covered wagon, and after loading in bedding and provisions they would start for our home; after a visit there they proceeded to New Antioch, where a lot of relatives and acquaintances lived. To do this they had to travel fifty-five miles beyond to Clinton County. What interesting stories they would relate concerning the adventures of their trip; and their descriptions of the country and people were so good that their conversation was a joy. I see them yet as



Robert Utter



Susan Utter



William Utter



Elvira Utter



they gathered in our best room, with father as host and mother as caterer, while the savory odor of ham and eggs pervaded the air and perhaps a warm stirred cake, turned out of its pan to cool, added its good fragrance.

Araminta had been carefully reared and was a young lady of education and refinement, whose husband was devotion itself to her. She was sweet and pretty and had some nice clothes. I recall that she had a black silk dress such as matrons wore in those days upon dress occasions. This good gown was brought out upon Sunday morning, when her doctor husband decided that it was too tight and needed the seams to be let out. Later we heard that when she reached their more fastidious relatives in Kentucky the black silk was pronounced too loose to suit the closely fitting fashion of the day.

This was the last visit our relatives made to us during grandfather's life. We found Dr. Butterfield fine company, and many a merry romp we had with him. He and Cousin Araminta were devout members of the Christian Church. Dr. Butterfield wrote a number of poems, which he had published. When they visited us Miss Nailer, a bright young teacher, boarded with us. She had an accordion, an instrument then much in vogue and upon which she played nicely. One evening Miss Nailer and Dr. Butterfield sang, she accompanying upon the accordion. Our evident good time aroused grandfather's curiosity, and he asked that they play and sing for him. Doctor raised the bass notes on the instrument, and oh, such a horrid growl as issued, making the most striking discord. Of course we all laughed immoderately, and grandfather was pleased with the results upon us, although he could not hear a single sound.

I am glad that I can present in this history a picture of one who was a member of our pioneer party that came over the mountains so long ago. We have no likeness of either our grandfather or grandmother, but one of his grandchildren has furnished me a copy of a picture of Uncle Robert Utter. I am surprised to find that it has a real resemblance to our father, they both seeming to have inherited the looks of their Badgley ancestors.



In a former chapter I mentioned our grandmother's lost son, William Utter, who was left with his grandparents in New Jersey. His younger brother, our Uncle Robert, named his only son for this brother, and our cousin William was altogether worthy to be the successor of William the first. As I think of this Utter branch, whose members were so near to us in every sense of the word "relative," I can but wish that some of their name would write the annals of that worthy family. Uncle William's wife, Elvira, was also descended from an interesting family. Samuel Rogers was a pioneer preacher of note in our church's history, a true soldier of the Cross, who would camp in the wilderness using his saddle for a pillow. He forded streams by urging his good horse to leap even into foaming rivers, where he would emerge on the opposite side in a dripping condition. Oh, the heroic courage of the ministers, who stopped for no obstacle, and of the early church, which brought its religion into the wildernesses of our new lands! I am proud to have felt the influence of such a character as Uncle Sammy Rogers. He has left an impression upon at least four generations, and will be remembered when at the last day he hears the "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

After Uncle William's marriage he removed to Jefferson County, Indiana, where he had previously purchased a hundred acres of land. Their first children were twin girls, and one was named Sophronia for our mother. The other twin daughter is our cousin Araminta, now Mrs. C. E. Packard. Eight other children were born to them. I think William Utter and his wife lived together for more than sixty years. It was upon the occasion of their golden wedding that I last saw our dear father. It is a long space to pass over with but a movement of the pen — from the days of our childhood visits from the Utter cousins to the golden wedding of William and Elvira — but it was so notable a family reunion that I wish to link it in here. Besides father, Brother William and his family and my son Will and I were there.

Cousin David Utter's gifted wife wrote a poem for the occasion which told of the far-away days when the aged pair

were bride and bridegroom. Her daughter Margaret read it to us, and because of its many references to the past, as well as its happy expression, I will insert it here:

'Twas fifty years ago to-day,  
In golden harvest weather,  
When groom and bride stood side by side  
And joined their hands together.  
With hopes and fears, with smiles and tears,  
The solemn words were said,  
And forth from out her father's house  
The willing bride was led.

And did she wear a gown of silk,  
And veil and wreath so sweet?  
Did white-robed children scatter flowers  
Before her slippered feet?  
Had she a monstrous trunk, well filled  
With ribbon, lace and all?  
And did she go in Pullman car  
To see Niagara fall?

Ah, well you know I was not there,  
And if I guess amiss  
The bride will kindly set me right;  
I think 'twas more like this—  
I think her sisters all, that morn,  
Were up and doing early,  
Before the cocks were crowing yet,  
And while the dews were pearly.

I think that in the fireplace  
The hickory logs were burning;  
And chickens in the frying pan  
A golden brown were turning,  
And ears of sweet young corn, perhaps,  
Before the coals were toasting,  
And under ashes hot, maybe,  
Potatoes might be roasting.

For fifty years ago, you know,  
In houses built of logs,  
They had not learned to make ice cream,  
And fry the legs of frogs.

## ANNALS OF OUR ANCESTORS

But sweeter is the feast than wealth  
 Or luxury can afford,  
 When plenty dwells within the home,  
 And love sits at the board.

And when the home-made feast was done,  
 And all good-bys said o'er,  
 Perhaps a good stout horse was led  
 Up to the cabin door;  
 Perhaps the young wife clambered up  
 And sat behind her beau—  
 Now tell us, father bridegroom, was  
 The wedding journey so?

And slowly did she take her way  
 (Now that she had her *Will*)  
 Along the narrow bridle path  
 So shady and so still?  
 Perhaps beneath the trees sometimes  
 They rested by the way—  
 "Ten minutes for refreshments"—brides  
 Still do so to this day.

Perhaps they passed through Wilmington—  
 Perhaps they stayed a while—  
 Then on to Cincinnati rode  
 For many a weary mile.  
 In that far day, I've heard folks say,  
 Pigs roamed the city street;  
 Perhaps they scattered right and left  
 Before the horse's feet.

The little house, at first their home,  
 Stood lonely in the wood;  
 Now sun and stars look through the roof  
 That gave them shelter good.  
 If there sometimes the bride was sad  
 And missed her sister's chat,  
 The babies soon began to come  
 And put an end to that.

\* \* \* \* \*

All this was years and years ago:  
 Still stand they side by side,  
 Again we meet the groom to greet,  
 Again we bless the bride.

Children and children's children come  
From near and far away,  
To crown with golden memories  
The golden wedding day.

Old Father Time the bridegroom's hair  
With frost has sprinkled well;  
If on her head some flakes were shed  
They melted as they fell.  
But heads may bear the touch of Time  
'Gainst which the heart is proof,  
As fires burn brightest on the hearth  
When snow lies on the roof.

The common lot of life is that  
Which greatest blessing yields;  
With joy and pain God blessed their lives,  
With sun and rain their fields.  
They sowed good seed in life's fair spring,  
They toiled for you and me;  
Honor and love and gratitude,  
These shall their harvest be.

Long may their presence linger yet  
Within this peaceful home,  
And oft around their happy hearth  
The gray-haired children come.  
May health and cheer attend them here,  
May blessings never cease,  
Their ways be ways of pleasantness  
And all their paths be peace.

Sometimes I can but stop and say, "The dear old days!" So much of simplicity, of household love, of freedom from the bonds of what we now call "society"! How sweet were the days of our childhood in that unpretentious home our parents made for us! Our old grandfather still tarried by our fireside, but his days were numbered and I have a clear remembrance of his passing in our life's springtime. Early one winter in our southern Ohio, before the holidays, father was getting ready for an evangelistic tour which would include some two weeks. While making preparations to leave us he became filled with the most gloomy forebodings, and

communicated his fears to our mother, who exhorted him to leave all in the Lord's hands and bade him go forth to the call of duty. I can still see how he looked over the stovepipes to see if they were in order and quite safe, and after he had done all he could to insure our safety, he took the carriage and his two little bay horses and placed his carpetbag of clothes for the journey under the back seat, and stood at the front gate ready to leave. The trusty little horses waited for their driver while he took an affectionate leave of us all. Finally the lines were gathered in his hand and he was soon out of sight, going over the slippery roads in the direction of the Little Miami River, from whence he was to go to Clinton County and beyond to a new field of labor. He left us all in our usual health.

A few days later mother boiled a pot of beans with pork, a dish of which grandfather was very fond, and he ate of this rich, strong food with great relish. We all retired rather early. Mother was the last one, and she it was who covered the fire. About midnight she heard grandfather making a noise in his room, which opened off the sitting room. She at once went to investigate and found that he was in a hard chill. She made haste to open the fire and get a kettle of hot water ready, then wrapping grandfather in a quilt she soon had his feet in hot water and gave him some herb tea. The chill passed, to be followed by high fever. When the sun rose the next morning we children gathered about our grandsire's couch with an interest new to us, for we could see how ill he was. In one of his lucid moments he called for our sister Ida, who was his favorite. He had given her the name of "Maggie." I can yet see her, a small child of perhaps six years of age, standing by his bed while he stroked her sunny hair and called her endearing names. The fever ran high, with a hard, dry cough and delirium.

Now all this time our father, unconscious of our anxiety, was going on his way, getting further from us every hour. During the day grandfather grew rapidly worse. When our good neighbors heard of his illness they were at once by his bedside, ready to render assistance. Sam, the hired man, was

to go after father, as we were not sure a letter would reach him. It was arranged that Sam was to stop at Morrow and inform Uncle Joseph, and then proceed toward Clinton County after father, hoping that he would soon learn of his exact locality. Uncle Joseph left at once for our house, and found grandfather glad to see him; and to his beloved "Josie" he told his own story, saying he had been sick five weeks, when in reality it had been but five days.

Night and day the neighbors came and stood about our grandfather's bed, while he held on to life with a surprising tenacity. We children could hardly endure the strain of the first real suffering we had ever known or seen. We kept outdoors all that the weather would permit. The last day of his life Reuben VanZandt and Uncle Jimmie McCash remained with us while he was sinking and it seemed every breath would be his last. I remember Mr. VanZandt's commenting on his long life and making the observation that it would be a mere speck in comparison to eternity. How long the nights were! Mother would have us retire early so as to give the watchers room about the open fire. Often in the darkness we would be conscious of the preparation of a midnight lunch, the odor of coffee and of fresh meat frying in the kitchen would cause us to be aroused, and for hours, children as we were, we would watch for the dawn of day. I would crouch by the east window to catch its coming and when I saw the morning star rising over Bruin's barn I had a thrill of joy for I knew the train of stars were winking out one by one, and soon the King of Day would outshine even "the bright and morning star."

One morning not long after midnight our mother, worn and weary, came to our room to retire and to tell us that grandfather was gone, and now she wished to rest while the neighbors were busy in the front room. Later we found Mrs. Preston and Mrs. Bruin in charge. How peaceful our aged one looked as the calm of undisturbed repose was clearly depicted on his dear old face. All could but rejoice that he had entered upon eternal blessedness. Such were the last days of one who through a long life had helped to make Ohio a de-



lightful land, and our last memories of our grandfather are those of one who, after finishing his life's work, lay sleeping at peace with all men, having lived honestly and godly in this world, where there is evil as well as good. Of this ancestor of ours it may be said as it was of Job, that he was

Of spotless manners, with a soul sincere,  
Evil his hate, and God alone his fear.

It was evening when Sam overtook father and gave him the sad news. Father made haste at once and had the carriage out and the little horses in harness, ready to drive all the long hours of night in order to be there to see the last earthly hours of his father; but while Sam was delivering his message the good neighbor women were making grandfather's shroud, and, there being a doubt of father's getting the message, the preparations for the funeral service proceeded. A preacher from Mount Healthy, John Boggs by name, delivered the funeral sermon, and I still remember his text was about the house of many mansions: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

The undertaker came from Mount Pleasant with a red cherry casket. The minister stood at the head while he talked to us of the heavenly home where "age has no power to destroy." Child as I was, the impression made has lasted all through the years — the sermon, the house filled by our good neighbors, the casket uplifted upon the shoulders of the bearers, the graveyard on the hill. I even remember that one of the bearers was a very tall, gray-haired man, one of the Sprong family.

Returning home, we had dinner; when who should enter but our dear father, who had driven all the night before. I recall that sweet, quiet hour when he sat with our little circle about him and in tender words spoke of the filial love he bore his parents. A long life of events and many changes has not yet shut from me this scene nor the impression of the shadow of grief that passed over our childhood's brightness when we lost our old grandfather. It seems sad that the hand of time

has been busy in despoiling even the memorial stones placed by our father to mark the graves of his parents before he left Ohio for Minnesota. Not many years after their erection, some vandal hand with one fell blow broke the headstone of our grandmother's grave, and it lay face to the ground. Our grandfather's stone stood for years, until time felled it also, and now the rank grass and many rains of summer and snows of winter have almost obliterated the letters carved upon it more than half a century ago.

I can but cherish a wish that these fallen stones may be replaced yet, either by granite or some other enduring monument to the memory of those who were our prime progenitors and who gave their entire lives to service, asking no reward in return. They did a great work when conditions did not contribute to make life easy. Let us transmit the memory of their unselfish lives to our posterity unto our latest generations. Should any of their descendants wish to do so generous an act, they will find the neglected graveyard on a hill in district number ten, Springfield Township, Hamilton County, Ohio. The hill overlooks the valley of the Mill Creek near Finneytown Corners.

The days of our life's springtime were slipping by all too swiftly. Little Sister Ida was outgrowing mother's arms. She tells me that she remembers yet the last time she was rocked to sleep in that precious embrace. It was one Sunday evening that mother took the youngest upon her lap as she sat reading "The Christian Age," and I was holding the candle for her while she read. Ida lay back in her arms and pretended to be asleep. Mother looked down at the little rogue and said: "She is asleep, and I can't bear to wake her up." So our baby was for the last time carried upstairs to bed, though I had an idea that she was "playing 'possum." Sister said to me only this summer, as we were mutually recalling those days of ours, concerning this incident of her childhood: "I was carried upstairs and deposited in the middle of a big, soft feather bed, and the sweet memory of it has stayed with me all through my life."

Father used to sing our baby to sleep, but our dear mother

did not sing, though she liked to hear others do so; her favorite hymn was the grand "Coronation" — "All hail the power of Jesus' name!" Father's favorite was "How firm a foundation." I seem to hear again that rich voice of his as the old songs rolled forth from his lips out on the back porch, where he rocked back and forth, holding close the little nestling figure. One of his lullabies was:

The chariot, the chariot, its wheels roll in fire  
As the Lord cometh down in the pomp of his ire!  
Lo, self-moving it drives on its pathway of cloud,  
And the heav'ns with the power of the God-head are bowed!  
The judgment, the judgment, the thrones are all set  
And the Lamb and the white vested elders are met!

I can remember no more of the words, but the full voice I do not forget as it resounded under the walnut tree and rolled out over almost the entire neighborhood. As he sang the last line my childish imagination saw a long line of elders standing wearing white vests!

Our little sister early showed signs of mental brightness, and mother took pains in teaching her, for she rewarded every effort. We record an incident of her little girlhood when, in talking to a child of one of the neighbors, she used the word "disagreeable." "'Disagreeable, disagreeable!'" mocked the playmate; "*that is one of your mother's big words!*" At our table when a word was brought in question as to pronunciation or meaning, two members of the family would usually rush to the dictionaries; we children turned to Webster's, and if that authority did not coincide with father's opinion he showed us in Worcester's dictionary, for he took this as the final word in English.

In the springtime of her life our little sister made a profession of religion. She had gone with father to Antioch to an August meeting, and I remember how she ran to meet me on their return, telling me that she had been baptized. She was the first of us children to take this step, though the youngest of us all. Her example was good, and gentleness was a strong point in her character. However, her gentleness and tenderness did not grow out of an easy or languid tempera-

ment, for she was impetuous in all that touched her heart, and love and loyalty dwelt there then as now.

The petals of the springtime fell and lay in fragrant drifts in our orchards; the gooseberry and currant bushes began to show their little spheres of emerald down in the eastside garden that sister says has so often, through the years, come back to her in her dreams; the leaves of summer were showing brightest green and childhood, too, was swiftly passing. We were outgrowing the trundle-bed where little sister and I slept; drawn out each night from underneath mother's "big, high bed," the little resting-place was warm and comfortable and near to the dear parents — a place of safety the like of which has never returned. Only in feigning was little sister rocked to sleep in mother's arms or carried to the trundle-bed, and only in thought can the days of life's springtime come back; but we are thankful for the memory of a dear home and wise and loving parents, so we will not regret the budding time, for the seasons of flower and fruit come with the flying months.

Here in the late autumn of life I have tarried long with "story spring." I who write am recalling memories more than sixty years old. When I was seeing again so clearly the woods and fields about our old home I wrote to the "Cummings girls" and asked about the landscape of our childhood. They wrote me that Cook's Woods with its grand old shade had passed away, and with it the anemones, spring beauties, and harebells. The haunts of our springtime have entirely changed — not a tree nor a woodland bird remains. "You could not obtain a cord of wood for love or money," wrote our old playmates. Walnut Tree Farm has changed its tenant; no one is there to meet and greet Phœbe bird's spring call; there is no sugar bush nor woodland path to the old meeting-house; the little sisters who were lost in that shade which falls no more are far apart. Their heads are white with the frosts of many winters. For all the springtimes she made me happier, her one sister thanks her. She has written on my memory but sweet and tender recollections, fragrant as the orchards in life's spring. I would keep the memory of those days green until we too pass on, as all the rest have done.

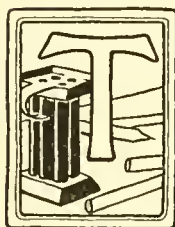
Reluctantly I close this chapter. I like to transport myself there where we felt with father and mother that hosts of shining angels were camping about our home, and truly did we children feel safe where our parents kept loving guard. When storms were sweeping wildly and bright lightning gleams were presenting a view of the fierceness and the madness of a thunderstorm, if we could find our parents and hear their reassuring voices we felt that we were safe. The memory of our early faith, so akin to our faith in our Heavenly Father, lives with us and helps us from springtime to summer, from autumn down to life's wintertime.





## CHAPTER VIII

### OUR NEIGHBORS



HERE was variety, of course, in our neighbors, and they had their part, and a real one, in our lives. Well do I remember the strange old woman who used to inhabit a little cabin a few rods north of our house. I cannot say that it was picturesque, with bending trees and drooping vines clinging to the eaves. It was a rustic cabin belonging to one who cared little for flowers and poetry. There was a well-beaten path between our houses — not that we were the dearest of friends, but because our well usually had water in abundance. After I had grown old enough to “know good from evil” I asked mother how it ever came that they gave “Aunt Isabelle” a lease to that lot, as I clearly saw her presence was an annoyance to our parents. Then she told me the following short story: “While on a visit to relatives who lived in the Miami valley, we contracted ague and were all down in bed helpless; and Aunt Isabelle came in and was so kind and attentive that we thought it would be helpful to her and to us, as well as pleasant, to have her near us. When her little cabin was moved over close to us, she seemed so changed we have almost forgotten that she was ever good and kind.”

The early days of the nineteenth century were full of tense religious revolution; the question of creeds and confessions of



faith was much talked about when people gathered at husking-bees and log-rollings. Along with this discussion came the meaning of the word "baptism" as to its form, whether immersion or sprinkling. Aunt Isabelle had listened to the arguments pro and con until she decided to be immersed, but she thought she would not care to unite with any of the churches. As our father was a preacher, and a man given to hospitality, our home was the "preachers' hotel," and Aunt Isabelle made herself very busy finding out the one who would "baptize me and let me run," as she used to say. At last an itinerant minister of humble gifts and pretensions immersed Aunt Isabelle. She remained true to her first idea of life, which one might call her baptismal vows, for none did more running than she. Brother Will told it as a fact that she had been known to empty a pail of water on the ground when she saw a carriage drive into the yard.

I see her now with that old slat sunbonnet, her wrinkled face, light brown eyes flecked with small spots of a darker brown flashing with curiosity and peering out from beneath that bonnet's shade as in a loud whisper she would demand of us, "Who's here?" Then after a few leading questions she would make haste to depart on her news-carrying round among the neighbors. On such occasions she donned her old hack bonnet and spread a checked gingham umbrella, and with her knitting in her hand she sallied forth to be gone the rest of the day, telling who had arrived and for what purpose, the latter information either founded on fact or purely imaginary. So it was that, should we chance to call on the neighbors later, we found them well informed as to our company and affairs generally. Aunt Isabelle was the first to hear that cholera was in New York and that a comet was booked for the coming fall; that the Millerites were to have an encampment on Mill Creek and display large paintings on canvas of Daniel's vision, where we were to see portrayed the image of metal and clay and the old dragon all covered with scales. Next she bore us the news that "the saints" were preparing ascension robes. These wonderful tales filled the hearts of us children with terror; I could scarcely breathe for very fear until I should have a chance to ask

mother about all these awesome stories, which I did while Isabelle was still on the departing path.

The hired man, Sam by name, did not like this queer old woman and, believing himself to be something of a poet, he made a number of stanzas with Aunt Isabelle as the subject. I have forgotten all but these few lines:

The house that looks so lonesome—  
Why don't you tear it down?  
The inmate is so loathesome;  
How I detest her frown!

Yes, the house did look lonesome without, and within as well, where an aged woman sat by a smoldering fire through the long winter evenings, plying her knitting-needles making socks for market, so that she could buy tea and coffee and brown sugar and, once in a while, a little molasses. All her cooking was done in the primitive style; the meat was boiled over the fire; numerous pothooks dangled from the old black crane; an iron teakettle suspended from one of the hooks sang or gurgled or hissed, making at times its own startling combination of sound in that silent house. An old cat slept away the long winter evenings on a rug near Aunt Isabelle as she thought of the long years fled, or perchance, and more likely, of some news she was eager to tell.

Our hired girl would sometimes take me to spend the evening there; I remember how comfortable she always kept her little house. There were two beds in the one room; these were made up very high with foot valences all around them. In one corner of her room she did her kitchen work and another was her sitting room; the beds were in corners which were doing duty as bedrooms and the only partitions between all these apartments were imaginary lines.

One day Aunt Isabelle called in Brother Joe and me to sympathize with her in a misfortune. She had a fine smoked ham which she was keeping for spring, when one day she discovered that it had grown strangely light in weight. Upon examination she found that mice had gnawed a hole in the top near the string and had eaten out all the good lean meat,

leaving nothing but the shell; and she was so sadly disappointed that we children pitied her with all our hearts.

Aunt Isabelle had a characteristic which seemed most strange to us — she was more fond of other people than of her own relatives, and was always out with her kinfolk and never willing to receive their help. I recall that one, however, insisted upon being helpful to her, though he was but a distant relative; every winter he hauled her wood and ricked it up for her, and came often to daub the cracks between the logs of her house with clay taken from the roadside near. He finally made quite a little pond by excavating for Aunt Isabelle's protection. Upon this little sheet we children used to slide in winter, and I remember vividly once testing the depth of this pool. One cold day in March I had been sent to get some gunpowder tea, and was so afraid I should forget my errand that I kept conning over "Gunpowder tea, gunpowder tea!" as I ran. So taken up was I with my task that before I knew it I had slipped into the pool by Aunt Isabelle's! When I came out I was so muddy and bedraggled that I had to return to wash up. When I got where mother was I thought over my errand and it struck me as absurd, "Mother," I said, "how foolish that is, '*gunpowder tea!*' Why call it by such a name?" She explained to me that it was called so because of its small globes of tea leaves, and I was sent on my way again, this time with my lesson learned.

One time Emmaline Van Zandt and I went over to Aunt Isabelle's cabin and found that she was out on one of her gossiping tours, and we thought it no harm to enter and prepare a surprise for her; so we took some quilts and comforters which were handy and rolled them up and attired them in some of Aunt Isabelle's garments, with her old gossiping bonnets for headdresses. These figures we placed on chairs about the room, assisted by Brother Joe, who was with us, and then we took our departure and quietly and meekly sat down by our own fireside. It was not long before Aunt Isabelle came plunging in, saying, "You girls have been over to my house!" Strange to say she was not angry at this joke. The silent visitors in her room seemed to amuse the old woman.

She had some womanly feelings that cropped out in a way that surprised us once. It was when our little sister Ida was about three years old that we missed her one day and searched the house in every corner — the cellar, the barn, the yard, and the orchard — when it occurred to us that she might be visiting Aunt Isabelle. Sure enough, when we entered there was before the fire a cozy little bundle, head on pillow and nicely tucked in as to feet; sound asleep was baby sister on Aunt Isabelle's floor. She had come to see the old woman, and as the little one had become drowsy Aunt Isabelle had made her comfortable, and there she was. She begged us not to awaken her, but let her get her nap out, and so we did.

Our home was on a road that seemed to be a highway for beggars, and many queer experiences did we have with these strays or professionals; some were mendicant friars, some the harmless insane who in those days were allowed to wander as they pleased, others were what we now call tramps. One day some one knocked at our door when mother was busy, and she sent me to open it. There stood a young friar with a begging letter in his hand, which I took to mother to read. This explained that the bearer was dumb, and mother gave him a large copper penny current in that day. He nearly shook his head off when I presented it, indicating unmistakably that he positively declined it. As he was not advertised as deaf, our mother said, "I think it is a shame that the hordes of Europe are thronging here to beg our hard-earned money. A strong man like you should work and earn his living." It was then he found himself freed from his dumbness, and said with a brogue that he knew he could earn a dime, but he could get one without working too. Then he told a story by that time well known to us, namely that the river Po had been up to its old tricks again, having inopportunately overflowed and driven him afar to shine on the shores of America.

Before they built asylums for the insane I recall different ones who with wandering minds and feet came to our house. They radiated from the rapidly growing city of Cincinnati to all parts of the country. I think it was about the year 1847 that one morning, after our mother had prepared breakfast

and we were clearing the table, one of the roving insane presented himself at our door announcing that the Lord Jesus had sent him there for his breakfast. Mother in her calm voice answered, "He sent you to a poor place, as I am out of bread." Another character was "Crazy Charlie Havens," though generally his surname was omitted. He had been sent over the mountains from New York by his wealthy relatives and consigned to the care of Dr. Pierson. These relatives sent money for his board, but finally in some way he became a rover and struck out to take the road. Our father could recall his first appearance in our neighborhood when he was himself a young man. "Crazy Charlie" was at that time dressed in good clothes, presumably once the property of Dr. Pierson, even to a tall beaver hat. Thus he roamed over southern Ohio, coming to our place about once in six weeks. He was a silent man, who would come quietly along and open the back door and slip noiselessly in; if he found a fire in the fireplace, he would take his bundle of rags for a pillow and lie down with his feet to the fire in fine content. One time when Neighbor Brown gave him a bed he grew angry and declared that he was used to better treatment, even to lie on the floor before the fire. The Browns were new in the neighborhood in those days, and the kind and hospitable mother of the family thought she would give the poor fellow a good bed once; but he plainly made known his preference for the fireplace and his pillow of rags.

More than one morning on rising we have found Charlie stretched out before the fire with his favorite pillow. He always slept in all his clothing, and he wore two complete suits of outer garments too. It used to take an hour for him to eat bread and coffee, then he would lay in a good supply of meat, and potatoes. After keeping the table for him for a long drawn period he would look in the coffee-pot in quest of more "cool coffee;" into what remained he would pour water from the teakettle, and then fill three or four bottles of various sizes, from vials to pint flasks, with the diluted coffee or just warm water; these receptacles were then stowed away in his rag pillow and numerous pockets. This poor demented creature



was most slow in all his movements; but once did we see him moving rapidly, and that was upon a zero morning in winter. While we were doing up the morning work we looked north, and there on Brown's hill we saw some one who reminded us of "Crazy Charlie" coming down at a dog trot with his heavy club cane and familiar bundle of rags. All the children shouted: "It is 'Crazy Charlie'!" He was coming at such a gait we could scarcely believe our eyes. He greeted us in a clear, distinct voice, speaking of the weather. In pity we children stirred up the fire and put on the coffee-pot. We found him ready to talk as never before. He spoke of his home in the East, of the doctors and people he had known. He assured us that when doctors found that the sick must die they gave them a potion to get them out of their misery, and he seemed to approve of this method. Our father had known him from his first appearance in our neighborhood, but had never before known him to express an opinion on any subject, so we felt a new interest in him and hoped it might be an awakening; but on his next round he came back the same slowly moving creature talking in a thick whisper. Thus for a period of some thirty years he wandered over the country from Cincinnati to many of the neighboring towns, though his favorite haunts were ever the country places, where he could find lodging.

As the years went by Charlie's once splendid form—for he was of fine physique—began to show the coming on of old age; his hair was growing thin and white, his form was bent. He kept his tall, broken-down hat full of rags to keep his poor head warm, and a more forlorn and homeless man could not be found. People out of pity applied to the charitable societies for a comfortable place in which he might spend his declining years, but not so: he would slip out from these charitable shelters and be off on the road again. One day late in autumn, when the leaves were drifting down, one of our neighbor boys, while out hunting, found poor old Charlie down under the edge of a fallen tree, endeavoring to keep out of the heavy rain which comes with the late autumn. He was almost gone, but John Preston went for help and the good neighbors warmed and fed him until he revived, when he set out on another tramp.



Thereafter we lost all trace of this unfortunate man who had started in life with a good education and high hopes. It was said that the cause of his wrecked life was a disappointment in love, but this was an almost too commonly assigned reason for every kind of youthful disaster in those days. It seemed to us heartless pride in his relatives to send an unfortunate brother far away and allow him to come to so uncared-for an end. He simply disappeared, and no one seems to have noted it. I have been at some loss to know where to classify these waifs of humanity, and now they have strayed in here with our good old neighbors, so different from them in every particular.

Isaac Bruin and his industrious wife lived on the farm adjoining our Walnut Tree Farm on the east. "Brother Bruin," as father always called him, was a religious man belonging to the same church as our parents. He was father of an old-fashioned family of fourteen children, and was a man who understood how to make a farm pay. I venture to say that his pork barrel was never empty nor did they buy lard; they killed a beef every fall and dried great quantities of it, making the best dried beef I ever ate. There seemed an endless amount of poultry over there — chickens, turkeys, and guinea-fowls. They owned a herd of fine dairy cows and Mrs. Bruin knew how to make the finest brand of butter. They lived in a large brick house, with a great kitchen which in the early times was the family living room, with one of those great fireplaces fitted for a real backlog, and with a brick oven at the side of the immense chimney. From this oven the large family was supplied with the best of bread, mince pies, and stirred cake; they set a bountiful table. Their housekeeping was the best, with everything in order. They had a large east porch, scrubbed white and clean, where the family dined on hot summer days.

Mr. and Mrs. Bruin were as fine and stalwart specimens of manhood and womanhood as you would see anywhere, and their children must have been well nourished and cared for; and yet in the neighborhood cemetery there is a long row of marble slabs extending half-way across its extent, which mark the graves of those children who passed from

life in their youth. These boys and girls grew rapidly to maturity and then fell victims to the terrible disease, consumption; and that prosperous home of our neighbors assumed the appearance of a hospital. One of the older daughters married a man by the name of Orcutt, and he too died of the dread disease; then her two boys were taken in the same way. So this family, which seemed so well equipped for the battle of life, succumbed early; Sarah, Julia, Isaac — their names are all written on the stone. Jane, the youngest, was near my age, and was living when last I heard — the only one when we met after we were sixty. I remember her as a girl, handsome and bright, very popular in school, an expert in fine needlework. What lovely embroidery she used to do! In fact, the family did well everything they undertook.

It did seem strange that, with strong parents who gave no indications of anything like consumption and had no traditions pointing to any hereditary taint in their generations, the disease should have appeared. Of course we now attribute its devastations to contagion, and that would account for the family taking it one by one; though the father and mother lived and filled the allotted measure of threescore years and ten. When we were there ten years ago the old Bruin home was still standing and in good repair, but my friend Jane was the only survivor. There were many tragedies in this family, of which I will not write; they only prove that what may seem to a passer-by but a commonplace existence may know the most dramatic of situations. Time has lent a blissful forgetfulness to all the sorrows of their life. The stranger from a foreign land plows their fields and eats the fruit and gathers the harvest to fill the great barn which through our childhood was a marvel of magnitude. Their old gobbler that chased Brother Joe because he wore a red scarf is probably remembered only by me as I write of these kind old neighbors of ours.

The Bruin homestead, like many another, had its history written in part in its architecture. There stood the first log house, a large hewn-log dwelling, well pointed up with mortar; there were born their earliest brood, and there also some of them died. In that old home the busy mother cooked before

the fire and boiled the dinner in kettles hanging from the crane and swinging from the pothooks. All is silent now; in our childhood the poultry had nests in the fireplace and bedrooms — the family had moved into the brick house which came with the growing prosperity. Bruin's barn was located on a high piece of land in a direct line with the back part of our house. When at breakfast in the early morning, we would watch the sun as day by day it moved toward the north; and I remember how glad we were in summer days when it took its position just back of Bruin's barn, and as it arose enveloped the large building in a halo of glory. I had that same barn connected with my dreams of the end of the world, so much talked of in 1844. I thought of the appearance of the Father and the shining angels as being in the east, just over Bruin's barn. You may smile at the fancy of a child, but I dare to speak now of my youthful visions. One night when I looked from the east chamber window I saw a great shining light and two large books with a bow and arrow laid across them surrounded by a halo of light; I expected every moment to hear the trumpet call and see the King coming in His glory with all His shining train! I thought: "Oh, where is mother? If I can get my hand in hers I know I can face the Judge without a fear;" for I felt she would be accepted and that she would take me with her.

North of us in the early times lived a Scotch family by the name of Brown. They bought the land, built a brick house, planted the orchard, and tilled quite a prosperous farm. I recall old Father Brown as a quaint figure in the gallery of my childhood remembrances. He wore a Scotch cap, knee breeches, and knitted leggings, and his shoes had buckles on them. He spoke with a heavy brogue, and how he used to entertain us by teaching us Scotch words! He would pronounce words for the ears and nose of a dog, using an old striped bulldog he had brought with him as an illustration. This had the desired effect of amusing us greatly. I was still but a little child when this family moved out to Illinois, but they sold their farm to a relative of theirs named Matthew Brown. This family, too, were good neighbors and strict Presbyterians.

They went to church every Sunday without fail. They had a large family of sons; I presume there is a remnant of that family still living. I called there once with Brother Joseph, after an absence of more than twenty-five years, to find Matthew and his wife without the usual cradle and baby carriage in the middle of the floor. The mother was still a well-preserved and handsome woman, and that in spite of the annual baby. Just think of a woman taking care of a house and looking after all the babies without a maid! I am thinking that either the father did the housework or acted in the capacity of nurse for the small children; at least he always had hired help in his farm work.

When we went back once more to the old neighborhood we did not find the family of Matthew Brown, although we found the children of his relative, Alexander Brown, on the place their father had taken in early times. They too were Scotch of the Presbyterian stamp and devoutly religious. Betimes each Sunday they started for Cincinnati to attend their own church. Alexander was a school director and favored education. He had children of our age — Elizabeth, Margaret, Janet and William, all nice, well-behaved children, our playmates and schoolmates. How much these names recall to me, woven in with the lights and shadows of the long-gone years — I too “am a part of all that I have met.”

On the next farm north of Matthew Brown stood another brick house, where lived one of our trusted and excellent friends and neighbors, Reuben Van Zandt. He had a good farm and a large herd of cows, and made butter for the Cincinnati market. He, too, had an old-fashioned family of a dozen children, mostly girls. It was a fine sight on Sundays to see four Van Zandt young ladies and three young men come into the old brick meeting-house at Finneytown, always dressed in the best of taste. The girls were skilled with their needles, and made all their own clothes. It was a familiar scene I cannot forget to see those girls out in the front yard in summertime, all busy with their needles. They were doing tailor work for a large firm in Cincinnati. Their father on market days would bring the material out to them, and the next week

return the completed work. This brought to the handsome girls quite enough to buy the pretty and dainty garments they loved to wear. That Van Zandt home was indeed a hive of industry. I recall being there one afternoon till late, and I observed that as the sun was going down the girls all at the same instant began to fold up their work, and with one accord commenced to dress themselves for the barn; and putting on large aprons and sunbonnets and turning up their skirts, they were off with their shining pails to milk while their mother took care of the biennial baby.

The large front yard of the Van Zandt home was set out to cherry trees of a fine variety — what a picture it was in springtime, snow-white with bloom, and then in midsummer red and yellow and black with luscious cherries! There the little girls and the two boys picked the fruit by the bushel, which was taken to the city and sold for a good price. Fine preserves were made for that good table they set, too, and the apple butter and jelly the busy hands made were first-class. This home was a good example of the most excellent thrift. Mr. Van Zandt was a professional weaver, and of course had his own weave shop. I used to love to go in and get thrums (ends of weavers' threads) to knit garters, which were quite the vogue in those days, and knitted ones were the only ones we knew.

On that same Winton Road where lived the Van Zandts, the Browns, and other of our neighbors yet to be mentioned, was to be found one of father's old and tried friends, James McCash, and his wife Betsy. Their prominent characteristics were honesty, industry, and the thrift that brings an evident prosperity. He always filled an important position in the church, to which he gave his strong devotion, being an elder of great zeal and efficiency. As a family we should remember him with gratitude, for when our father was but a blind boy, eager for knowledge and so terribly handicapped, "Uncle Jimmie" was his friend and sympathizer, as we have related in another chapter. This understanding friendship came at a time when the average settler in a new country had little time to give attention to other matters than the clearing of



land and the establishment of a new home in a wild country. Uncle Jimmie married in early life and had a number of children; I recall Israel, David, and Isaac, and a daughter Elizabeth. Early his good wife, the mother of stalwart sons, died, and after due time he found a mate in the person of Aunt Betsy, who was one of the old-style fine managers. She had but one child, who was a cripple and never walked without support. I can see Johnnie yet as he sat in his low chair on his mother's clean-scoured porch all through the long summer days — a sight that ever touched us, for he could not play or employ himself as other children; he could but look on and see us full of the buoyancy and activity of childhood, bounding across the meadows or over the hills free from all infirmities. But I fancy it hurt his mother even more than it could the child sitting in his little chair, to think that his life must remain but an open prison, with no reprieve but death.

Johnnie's great affliction had a sad influence on all their lives, but they did everything they knew for him. He was born with a bright, active mind, and they brought him to father to be taught to read; and now, in that almost forgotten past, I see his half-sister Elizabeth, and perhaps a neighbor girl, who brought Johnnie each morning in a little wagon made purposely for him. This relieved to some extent the monotony of his life, and when he had learned to read that afforded him some amusement. His parents had an old-fashioned carriage into which their combined effort could lift Johnnie, so every Sunday he was at church to hear what was said and to see the church friends. The mother observed that her son became quite meditative, and she asked him if he was thinking of becoming a Christian, to which he made the glad response, "I am desiring to be baptized into Christ;" so Uncle Jimmie came over to tell father that on the next Sunday, if arrangements could be made, Johnnie would be ready for baptism after the morning service.

Our beautiful stream of water, Mill Creek, flowing west of Carthage, had a sandbar with a fine gravel margin, well washed and solid; this was the fording place, and in a clear, deep pool near the farther shore was the primitive baptistry. It was



to this place on a bright, sunshiny Sunday in midsummer that our church people resorted to attend the solemn ordinance of Christian baptism. Oh, how sweetly the music floated out on that rippling stream, while the bluffs on the opposite shore echoed the glad refrain, and how the great grove of ancient sycamores "clapped their hands" that a soul was born anew! I remember the little figure that sat in his chair on the margin of that limpid pool; and after the singing and a short address the deacons carried Johnnie in his chair out into midstream and laid him gently beneath the yielding wave. It was a glad day for that dear young heart, which had so greatly desired the liberty of becoming an obedient child of God. It caused the shadows to lift from a difficult pathway and some shafts of light to fall across it from the land of perfect day.

Uncle Jimmie McCash was a man of fine natural gifts; he had a good memory and read the literature of his day. He could tell both the religious and political history of our land, naming the presidents in their regular order and giving the characteristics of their various administrations. Many a morning he has come down to our house on one of his horses, opened the kitchen door, and found us at breakfast. Before he left he would be almost certain to refer to some anecdote in history, showing the bent of his active mind. The daily papers and multiplicity of books of to-day seem to one of my generation to overfeed the mind. In those days we had little time to read or discuss trifles, but with the clarifying influence of fresh air and muscular toil permeating their minds, the old neighbors when they met selected some of the very greatest topics for their conversation, and healthy and wholesome discussion often occurred in those farm homes of long ago. Let not the generations reigning in the stead of these feel that their ancestors were in any way unworthy of their children's progress, success, and mental attainments, for these ancestors of ours belonged to a time when some of our yet unexcelled heritage was written and sung.

After Uncle Jimmie had gone back to his farm work father would often remark on the great activity of his mental powers, and he expressed himself as believing that, had he

received a higher education, he would have been a power in a wide circle; but Uncle Jimmie too was a layer of foundations, and of these I am writing. Though dead to earth, he lives in the fine mental powers of his grandsons. I. N. McCash is national secretary of the American Christian Missionary Society of the Christian Church, another is a minister, and the other two are active Christian workers. Their mother was Martha Ann Van Zandt, the eldest of the twelve Van Zandt children, who in her girlhood gave promise of the splendid worth to which later years gave ample testimony. The influence of Uncle Jimmie McCash and of Reuben Van Zandt, like the soul of John Brown, goes marching on. We will never know the good they did until the books are opened on that last great day for which all other days have been made, when they shall be found worthy of their "Well done!" I. N. McCash writes me that the farms of his grandfathers are owned by Germans now, and have but a little resemblance to the old farms, although Reuben Van Zandt's brick house remains much the same. Like our old farm home, the orchards have largely disappeared.

I recall a sad accident to Uncle Jimmie which occurred some time late in the fifties. He had come down to our house to borrow a scythe; as usual he came on horseback, and in this particular instance mounted on a colt not well broken. As soon as the young animal saw the glittering blade lifted to his shoulder he became unmanageable and threw his rider, bruising him terribly, besides the laceration of his fingers by the sharp scythe. Well for him he fell not far from our front gate. Father, the hired man, and Brother Will rushed to the rescue, and while the two former were making arrangements to pick up the dear old man Will was on a horse galloping up the road to the McCash home with all haste, and soon their hired help came down with Aunt Betsy in a temporary ambulance made from a long sled with a feather bed and coverings in it. After dressing the cut fingers and wrapping up the hand in a warm poultice of bread and milk, they lifted him upon the sled and he was carefully transported to his good home, almost a mile distant. This was a serious shaking up, and it

was many weeks before he was able to be out. During that time the Mount Pleasant Church came over and had prayer meeting at his home. Added to the infirmities this fall occasioned, he was afflicted all his latter years with asthma. Their old home was some distance from the barns, so Uncle Jimmie prepared for their declining years by erecting a new frame house near his other buildings, so he could the more easily attend to his chores. Thus it came about that they left the old home for the new, placing a tenant in the former to carry on the work of the farm.

As the years passed on Johnnie became more and more helpless, eventually losing his mind, and they found it necessary to place him in the Long View Hospital at Carthage, some four miles distant. Before this sad day good Uncle Jimmie had been called to his rest and Aunt Betsy was all alone; but true to her life's principles she clung to her afflicted child, and every week she made a tour, I presume on horseback, over the long stretch of road to the state hospital at Long View. Poor, dear heart, how sad it all was to finish her days in this way! After a most laborious life on this large farm with her house-keeping duties, her large dairy, her much scouring and scrubbing, she found herself alone in the midst of the accumulations of her long and industrious life, her good husband gone, her one poor child to whom she had been so devoted in a condition even her warm mother love could not help, and the fruits of her manifold labors were but poor comfort, unshared by her own. Her dear home was rich in the household treasures of her day; the rag rugs and striped rag carpet, the work of her middle life, were kept carefully swept and dusted; upstairs in the clothes presses were stacks of beautiful quilts and blankets, piled one upon another. What wonderful quilts they were, quilted so closely sometimes that they were almost darned! The old names for the patterns chase through my memory, though I wonder if any skillful, aged fingers set their careful stitches in patchwork any more — diamonds and herringbone, wreaths and feathers and fans, wrought out in fine stitches that are a wonder yet; parallel lines there were, too, and on some quilts they were no more than an eighth of an inch apart.

Ever orderly, Aunt Betsy kept all scraps of new calico or muslin neatly rolled up and put away for future use. In the days of her activity she pieced many quilts, and their construction was elaborate and served to fill pleasantly many a winter evening. She had taken an orphan girl, Mary Jane Packer, to bring up, and when the evenings grew long there was quite certain to be a pleasant home picture of the old times beside Aunt Betsy's wide fireplace. Supper was over, the hearth swept, and a bright fire roaring up the great chimney; in a cushioned chair beside a candle of her own making sat comfortable Aunt Betsy, and near her the young girl, Mary Jane, each busy with patchwork. Aunt Betsy would have the paper pattern and be cutting out the small quilt pieces for Mary Jane to carefully sew together and join into blocks. What a revel of color there was — sometimes pieces of plain yellow, red, green, and blue, or prints with white background and tiny pink roses or "shawl flowers" figured there — such a mass of bright cotton pieces! Sometimes the "blazing star" flashed its rays of red, blue, and green beneath the girl's needle or it was "Irish chain" or "thirteen diamond" she put together with great precision. I remember also the basket, compass and "orange quarter" pattern among Aunt Betsy's pile of nice quilts. Very pretty ones were often made from two colors, as white and blue or red, or yellow or green joined with the pure white. Every piece in the blocks made under Aunt Betsy's direction had to match, all the lines being even. Besides the patchwork quilts they made others by basting upon white muslin strips designs in colors, as roses and leaves, with vines cut from plain green calico running around the quilt for a border; all these designs were hemmed down by hand with the finest of stitches. There usually were white blocks between the patterns sewn on the groundwork, and what fine quilting was exhibited in such spaces! Sometimes it was done in tiny diamonds not more than a half-inch across. When Mary Jane married and went to her new home, Aunt Betsy gave to this motherless girl six beautiful quilts. At last Aunt Betsy was left alone; she did not hear the sound of her own voice save as she called the house cat. Still she kept up her "sanitary

housekeeping;" no one knew better than she how to keep her home immaculate, but she was all alone, and sometimes the hours must have dragged wearily. Her hungry mind was reaching out to be fed, and some way, and happily, we believe, there fell into her hands the fiction of the day, such as the stories of E. P. Roe and others forgotten now; to Aunt Betsy they were a streak of fortune, and she became a great admirer of these "best sellers," greatly to the surprise of her younger friends who related the story to me on one of my visits to Carthage. In Uncle Jimmie's day all fiction was denounced and called lies and thought to be of baneful influence, but to Aunt Betsy it came to fill an emptiness and a longing; and presenting, as these books did, even the ills of life with a halo of glory, I fancy they must have given to her the thought of compensation for sorrow and disappointment, the idea of community of suffering, and the hope of the final solution of this life's mysteries grown stronger in her heart.

I wonder if all those fine quilts Aunt Betsy used to exhibit to us are perished or if anyone thinks now to keep a sort of tramp room for strange wayfarers. Uncle Jimmie and Aunt Betsy prepared such a refuge in the upstairs of the frame part of their house, furnished a bedroom with a coarse but clean and comfortable outfit with bedding easily washed and always ready. The Bible Christians of those days made practical application of the commands of our Lord, and did not neglect the admonition of this inspired Teacher, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers." Any lone man tramping his way through the country between Hamilton and Cincinnati could find supper, bed, and breakfast at Uncle Jimmie McCash's. No hotels were found on that road then, but how kindly was the free hospitality!

The last years of the fifties, before we left the old Waluut Tree Farm, were unfortunate in that we met with financial loss, as did many another in the panic before the war. It was a great help to us to live so near a good market for all farm products as was Cincinnati, but the location had its drawbacks also, from the fact that it was equally convenient for thieves from the city. We had numerous losses from such undesirable



citizens. One morning in spring I went out to feed my charges, three pretty heifer calves. As usual I carried out the warm milk and placed it in position and began to call them, but I called in vain. I went down into the pasture, but no frisky calves were there. When I reported our loss to mother she decided that a thief had come out in the night and captured them and had them dressed for market by daylight.

A horse was also stolen from us during the year, and a drove of fine stock hogs which father had in a pen by the roadside. These were probably being driven off to be fattened upon waste from stills. When the thieves got them as far as the crossroads two fine hogs made their escape, so we had our own meat that year after all, though not in the usual quantity. Nor were these thefts all. Our neighbor, James Cummings, saved a calf for us once. He was aroused in the night by hearing a calf bawl and a disturbance in our barnyard, so he arose and dressed and went hurriedly to investigate, when he discovered a butcher and his wagon standing in the big road, with a large heifer calf bound and ready to be lifted into the wagon. On hearing Mr. Cummings approaching the thief left the calf and drove rapidly away towards the north where the road would lead him over to the pike, that he might return speedily to the city and be lost in the multitude.

James Cummings was a good neighbor, and both our brothers liked him. His land joined ours on the south. He had a family of four girls, all good and industrious, and friends and schoolmates of ours. I remember when they first started to school, the dear little chubby, round-faced girls — Melissa, Addie, Emma, and Ella. James Cummings died before old age, but his good wife, Mrs. Selina Cummings, lived to be more than 90 years old and retained through all the long years "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" which is above price. Since beginning these written memories of the past, I have heard through her devoted daughters of her passing into rest. For more than fifty years we have been friends, and their letters come to me yet with a loving interest. It is good that these friendships have lasted through all the years, from the time I was a big schoolgirl and they little girls with wide,



beautiful braids of hair, down to the age when the silver lies white on my head.

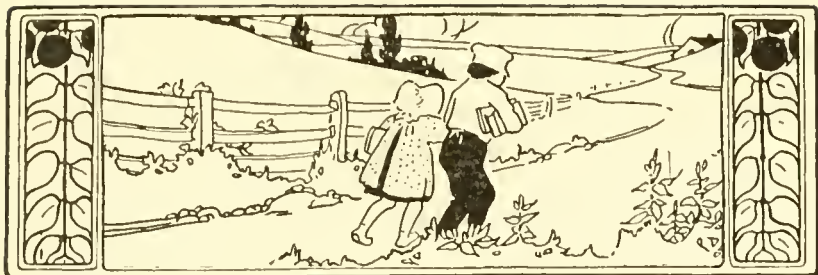
Sister Ida was popular among the neighbors, and as a little girl she would spend hours talking to Mrs. Van Zandt, Mrs. Preston, or Mrs. Cummings. She entered into the daily lives of all with interest, and was bright and witty in conversation even as a child. The Cummings girls were her friends, as were Libbie and Sue Krewson, daughters of the sister of the man who was destined to become her husband, though when she played with the Krewson girls she was not acquainted with Datus Myers. It is yet a joy to think that we had loyal friends among our neighbors, and that their memory had for our brothers during their lifetimes, and for us sisters who remain, a satisfaction and a pleasure.

It will be appropriate to copy here a selection from one of my brother William's last letters to me, where there is a reference to these same old neighbors.

DAYTON, Ohio, 13 Oct., 1898.

*To Julia A. Frost, Hiram, O.*

MY DEAR SISTER: You are sixty years old to-day, and I congratulate you on the return of your birthday and wish you many happy returns. It seems strange that we are old—we were so young—it was other people who were old—our grandparents for instance; but I never thought of our parents as old nor Van Zandt nor Browns, but Samuel Raymond and George Bradbury Robinson were old; and father said that the latter was an old man when he was a little boy. That world in [which] these people flourished and we were careless, happy children has passed away forever, and soon no one will know that there ever was such a world; naught will remain of these save the good which they did. The world passeth away and the fashion thereof, but he that doeth the will of [my] Father abideth to the end of the age.



## CHAPTER IX

### SCHOOL AND COLLEGE DAYS



RECALL the day, and even the hour, when Brother Will and I were dressed up to start for our first experience in school. Mother never sent a child to school to learn his letters, so after getting Brother Will to the point where he could read short sentences in the old blue-backed Webster's spelling-book, and when I could spell words of two letters — "a-b ab, i-b ib, o-b ob, u-b ub," and the rest of that list — we were pronounced fit to enter district school. We started in one afternoon to begin our school days. Mother, although a busy woman, could not tolerate uncombed hair or dirty faces or soiled garments. We two sisters always wore stiffly starched, corded bonnets of buff or pink chambray gingham. I recall the fact that on this occasion mother tied under my chin a pink bonnet of her best make.

It was after dinner when all arrangements were made and we were on the road to Finneytown Cross Roads, where stood a large church, the basement of which was used as a school-room — the district school. I remember as we passed along the way we stopped to watch the mud wasps gathering their balls of clay with which to build nests, when all at once it occurred to us that we were on our way to school. We quickened our steps and were soon at the schoolroom door, where we paused until Miss Ruth Perkins came out to take us by the

hand and lead us to our places. She was a fine, large woman and was called a good teacher. I was much embarrassed and hardly dared look up. The teacher untied my little pink bonnet and placed it on a peg, and I showed her my primer. She told me to spell the words and pronounce them aloud.

Brother Will was quick and bright and manly and not afraid, so he was soon a favorite. The schools in those times were just emerging from the earlier forms known to our father as the age of "lickin' and larnin'." Our first school was a subscription school, but it was not taught by a man as was usually the case. Miss Perkins was a good, kind woman and did not terrify the little ones. She led me on, little and timid as I was, until I too could read out of the blue-backed spelling-book. How long ago it all was, and the happenings of the months that followed are all but lost in the mists of years; it is almost strange that out of the gray shadows still peer the little pink sunbonnet and the mud wasps gathering the roadside clay.

The most of our teachers were young men. I recall one of these, Sam Tomlinson, called "Tumbleson" by the unlettered and the disrespectful. After his departure from our school, his time was designated by some of the big girls as "when Sam Tumbleson taught school here." I remember the spring morning he came walking in to ask mother if she would send her four children to a school he was about to teach in our district. The exact sum he specified for each I have forgotten, but I hardly think it could have exceeded fifty cents apiece. Mother gave him our names, and he began to teach us in hot weather. The summers in southern Ohio seem semitropical, and that was a burning season. The yellow clay dust in the big road would get almost too hot for our bare feet, so we would pick our way along the weeds and dog fennel which bordered the roads. The dusty, pungent smell of fennel — what pictures it can call to memory!

Sam was a good young man. "Get your Testaments!" was his morning order, and for the opening exercises we read aloud a verse around from the New Testament. One of his sisters had taught our school some years before, and she con-

ducted morning prayers and read from the Bible. She afterwards married a missionary and went to Jerusalem. That was so long ago that now it looks misty as to particulars.

It is easy to recall the schoolroom and the general appearance of the classes as they are called out on the floor. The first order was "Toe the mark!" the mark being a crack in the board floor. The tall girl would stand up to read; the lesson was from McGuffey's Fourth Reader, as I remember, and had for its subject "The Flight of Time." She drew a deep breath, knowing she would need every bit of it in the race she was to run with "Time." Her voice was shrill, and just as rapidly as is possible to anyone she read the dignified measure:

Heardst thou that knell? It is the knell of Time.  
And is Time dead? I thought Time never died!

This is as nearly as I can write the way she rendered those stately lines: "Heardst-thou-that-kennel-it-is-the-kennel-of-Time-I-thought-Time-never-*did*!" Triumphantly she ran against the exclamation point, having outraced Father Time himself. The initiated were much amused.

Now Anderson Balser is trying his favorite oration. It is from Phillips upon the "Character of Napoleon," as in McGuffey's Sixth Reader. Anderson Balser was afflicted with stammering, but he bravely attempted "He is Fallen!" It was Friday afternoon and we were "speaking pieces;" Anderson arose and prepared to begin the great oration. At once he used up all his breath on the first sound as he expelled "h" from his lips; but he finally did triumph over the first three words, and "*He is fallen!*" smote the air. "We may now p-p-p-pause—" here he would fill his cheeks with wind, turn very red in the face, and choke down. Anderson had come to a pause indeed, and the master would excuse him. The next Friday he would again take the floor and get as far as "He is fallen!" and then begin to blow hard and be again excused. I think we must have sympathized, though we laughed; for so anxious were we to help him get the words out that I can remember some of Anderson's "piece," though sixty years at least have fled since those performances took place

on Friday afternoons. The stammerer was indeed ambitious to have attempted "He is fallen! We may now pause before that splendid prodigy, which towered among us like some ancient ruin, whose power terrified the glance its magnificence attracted."

Dr. McGuffey was a man who did much to give to the youth of our day the choicest and best literary productions of the nineteenth century. From his books we committed to memory some noble specimens of English. Friday afternoons were spent in spelling matches, declaiming, or reading compositions we had written. Crude efforts were these latter, and supposed to be original. As a duty they were much resented and held in prime disfavor by the majority of us. We were not budding geniuses as we wrestled with "Spring" and other of the seasons, besides abstract qualities some of which to this day are not fathomed by us. I remember having once written upon "Spring." Brother William always distinguished himself as a speller; when we were "spelling down," he was certain to be chosen first. The leaders tossed up the broomhandle, and the first to catch hold had first choice for his side. William was always that choice.

Our first school, as I have mentioned, was held in the basement of the church built by a man who wished to be a benefactor to the community and who, in his last will and testament, left quite a sum of money to build a large brick church with a basement suitable for a schoolroom. This church was built on the side of a hill, which brought the schoolroom on a level with the east front, while the church in the second story and facing west was on the level in that direction. There was a fine plot in front where we had our playground, and on Sundays the farmers' horses were hitched there. The peculiar position of our schoolroom, with its back right against the hill, made some of the window sills even with the ground outside, and "thereby hangs a tale."

In the times of which I write the people who lived about the Finneytown Corners used to let their pigs run at large. One of the old mother hogs was always on the alert to gather up scraps left from our dinner baskets. The pigs wallowed



in a little marsh near by, where many frogs dispensed their music from early spring until the pond froze over in the winter and became a sliding place, which made a lot of fine fun for us all. One summer day, when the windows were all open and Bill Roebuck's dinner basket was setting carelessly in the window, along came old Mother Hog and, quietly taking the handle of Bill's basket in her mouth, she rushed off in great haste. In this emergency the teacher gave us all permission to give chase, which we embraced with alacrity, Bill leading in hot haste. The whole school ran pell-mell, until the hog dropped the basket to gain time. The dinner was spoiled, but enough sympathy was created to cause the other children to contribute toward Bill's dinner, and he nor we did not leave our dinner baskets in the window again.

Some one gave us a nice, large, strong rope, from which we made a swing that was a never-failing source of amusement. I do not remember that anyone ever quarreled over this swing. The locust tree from which it was suspended was one of the kind said by many to attract lightning. It is true that it was struck several times and the top badly broken, but the great, strong limb where our swing hung, and which leaned over the bank, remained intact, so we used it after the beautiful top was denuded.

This church and schoolhouse combined must have been built about 1838, and did service for some eighteen years, when the hill began to settle and the foundations gave way, so that a great crack appeared which continued to widen until it became necessary to place a heavy brace and wide board against the corner for support. Later, and after we had left Ohio, the building was taken down and the bricks were used to erect a smaller church on the level place in front of the old building — the spot which had once been our playground. The rebuilding of the free church was the work of the combined community. Another schoolhouse for our district had been built before, however, where we too attended school. The district bought an acre of land at the north end of father's farm and built a neat frame building there. A son of old Mr. Cummings had the contract for this new building. Young



William Cummings was a fine, industrious man, and I used to watch him work, as the new building was in full sight of our house. It has always pleased and interested me to see things develop, and so I kept its progress in view till the last shingle was on and the house ready to be opened. A young man from Carthage engaged the school, boarding at home and walking the three miles every day. Sister Ida and I, the Balsers, Van Zandts, Browns, and the children of James Cummings were among the pupils. The latter were Melissa, Addie and Emma, who went to school with me.

It is appropriate to write here about our sister's favorite teacher. Ida says: "The very first teacher I can remember who took a personal interest in her pupils was from Cincinnati, Miss Kate Hickenlooper, a lady in every sense of the word. She came to that country school as a real missionary, and we surely needed her. She not only took charge of our lessons, but instructed us how to stand and how to walk and in mannerly behavior in general. She gave us lessons in the unheard-of art of drawing; she opened school with song in the morning. The seeds that were sown fell on good ground. She was past middle age and not handsome to look upon, but she had taught us but a few weeks when she was championed by the whole school, and woe betide any luckless outsider who said she was 'ugly!' Blessed is the memory of such a teacher! I was once with this beloved teacher on her brother's twenty-first birthday; he afterwards became Gen. Andrew Hickenlooper."

Our parents were anxious that their children should have better educational advantages than they themselves had known, and so they were ever interested in such matters. One day in the spring of 1850, the exact date of which I do not remember, Freeman Cary of Farmers' College came over on horseback and hitched at our front gate. Seeing father in a field near he made his way over the fence to unfold to him some new enterprises of his concerning Farmers' College. These were the attachment of an experimental farm to the institution and the addition of lectures on agriculture to the curriculum. The desire of this educator was to dignify and

ennoble the farmer and to make the value of higher education apparent to him. He urged them all to take scholarships in the college and to send their sons there.

Our father was himself a good teacher and helped us much at home; especially was this true in the case of Brother William, who was a boy of special mental promise. So great was our father's love of teaching that he had a school for beginners in our own home, teaching English and Latin grammar. Will became very much interested in this class. When he was but seven years old he could read *Historia Sacra* and translate it without missing a word. Soon he asked to join the class of young people who were studying with father, but he was told that he had not learned the declensions and that this was necessary before entering the class, whereupon he went diligently to work to prepare himself for entrance. In a very short time he had completed the task and came to father telling him he was ready, having learned the lesson. "What is that?" asked father. "Why, the declensions!" He was then admitted to the class and studied, besides Latin, Kirkham's English Grammar; he learned all the rules — there were thirty-six as I remember — besides parsing all the exercises in the book. He always had great penetration and an excellent memory. In our family of four children there were no two of us alike. The fact of the uncommon mental superiority of the first-born discounted the rest of us to such an extent that I think we all felt it.

Freeman Cary's visit to the countryside caused quite a sensation; a number of the well-to-do people took scholarships at fifty dollars each, for even if they had no children they could rent the scholarships to others. I recall Brother William's eagerness to start to college. This he was allowed to do when he was seventeen years old. He bought a new "Cæsar" bound in sheepskin; I can see it yet, and realize again what a proud day it was for him. Our little brother, Joseph, thirteen and small for his age, entered the preparatory school under Professor Waldron. Our common schools were very poor, and Joseph could not get interested; so this was really like the beginning of his school life. Father bought

his new books and it required a satchelful for his studies. The spirit of the school under the new professor was just what Brother Joe needed to arouse him, and he entered with zest into study.

Both brothers brought home their books every night for study, and father would help Will by drilling him in his Latin, so that his progress was even more rapid than otherwise. I wish I could make my grandchildren and grandnephews and nieces see our family group as we were when we gathered about the wide fireplace in those long winter nights. The bright fire leaped up; the light stand was brought out, two candles were lighted, and we settled ourselves for the evening. In the midst of our group would be our beloved parents — father with his silver hair shining in the firelight, and mother's lying so smoothly in soft, dark bands beneath her white lace cap. How father's highly magnifying spectacles shone as he looked up from an old copy of Cæsar! Mother's kerchief was folded neat and white across her breast, and that face of peace — for me there has never been another like it, so full of interest, so calm, so gentle! But once since have I seen such a pair of brown eyes, both soft and bright; they look up at me from the face of one of her great-grandchildren, my grandchild Winifred.

In our mother's hands was usually a garment in process of making or a piece of mending. We sisters sat in low chairs, Ida in the little red chair that had lost its rockers and I in the larger blue chair; she reading her school reader, and I struggling with my knitting. Ah, how quiet is the little sister, but how quick to hear a mispronunciation from the boys! Having heard a mistake, however, she would but quietly smile. Joe would be studying geography, and to our dear mother he looked for help, for geography was her specialty; Will would be reading Cæsar in monotone. Oh, the happy evenings of childhood, passing swiftly and long since gone!

Sometimes there in the candlelight father would stop to recite a poem. One I hear over the lapse of years, with a beat like an ocean throb, it is Derzhavin's "Ode to the Deity." For the sake of the days that will never return, may I lead

you through its verses? The grand voice of our father brought out all there was in it of dignity and sublimity.

O, Thou Eternal One! whose presence bright  
All space doth occupy, all motion guide;  
Unchanged through Time's all-devastating flight,  
Thou only God! There is no God beside.  
Being above all beings! Mighty One!  
Whom none can comprehend and none explore!  
Who fillest existence with Thyself alone,  
Embracing all — supporting — ruling o'er —  
Being Whom we call God — and know no more!

In its sublime research, Philosophy  
May measure out the ocean deep, may count  
The sands, or the sun's rays — but God, for Thee  
There is no weight nor measure; none can mount  
Up to Thy mysteries. Reason's brightest spark,  
Though kindled by the light, in vain would try  
To trace Thy counsels, infinite and dark;  
And thought is lost ere thought can soar so high,  
Even like past moments in eternity.

Thou from primeval nothingness didst call  
First, chaos; then existence — Lord, on Thee  
Eternity had its foundation; all  
Sprang forth from Thee — of light, joy, harmony;  
Sole origin of all, all beauty Thine:  
Thy word created all, and doth create;  
Thy splendor fills all space with rays divine;  
Thou art, Thou wert and shalt be glorious!  
Life-giving, life-sustaining Potentate!

Thy chains the unmeasured universe surround,  
Upheld by Thee, by Thee inspired with breath!  
Thou the beginning with the end hath bound,  
And beautifully mingled life with death!  
As spirits mount upward from the fiery blaze,  
So suns are born, so worlds spring forth from Thee!  
And as the spangles in the sunny rays  
Shine round the silver snow, the pageantry  
Of Heaven's bright army glitters in Thy praise.

A million torches lighted by Thy hand  
 Wander unwearied through the blue abyss;  
 They own Thy power, accomplish Thy command,  
 All gay with life, all eloquent with bliss,  
 What shall we call them? Piles of crystal light?  
 A glorious company of golden streams?  
 Lamps of celestial ether burning bright?  
 Suns lighting systems with their glorious beams?  
 But Thou to these art as the moon to night.

Yes, as a drop of water in the sea,  
 All this magnificence in Thee is lost!  
 What are ten thousand worlds compared to Thee?  
 And what am I then? Heaven's numbered host,  
 Though multiplied by millions and arrayed  
 In all the glory of sublimest thought,  
 Is but an atom in the balance; weighed  
 Against Thy greatness, is a cipher brought  
 Against infinity! What am I, then? Naught.

Naught! But the effluence of Thy light divine,  
 Pervading worlds hath reached my bosom, too;  
 Yes, in my spirit doth Thy spirit shine,  
 As doth the sunbeam in a drop of dew.  
 Naught! But I live, and on hope's pinions fly  
 Eager toward Thy presence; for in Thee  
 I live, I breathe and dwell, aspiring high,  
 Even to the throne of that divinity;  
 I am, O God! and surely THOU MUST BE!

Thou art! directing, guiding all, Thou art!  
 Direct my understanding then to Thee;  
 Control my spirit, guide my wandering heart!  
 Though but an atom 'midst immensity,  
 Still I am something fashioned by Thy hand!  
 I hold a middle rank 'twixt heaven and earth,  
 On the last verge of mortal being stand,  
 Close to the realms where angels have their birth,  
 Just on the boundaries of the spirit land!

Long ago the little lights went out, but no electric glow shines  
 on happier faces or more peaceful brows, nor a home where  
 love and faith dwell more securely.

Farmers' College was two miles from our home and was  
 easily seen towering above the treetops. The bell in the



belfry calling to chapel and recitations could be heard distinctly as we sat beneath our shade trees. As I write there is recalled to me most forcibly those care-free years in the old home with mother and father. Speaking of myself, I was slow in developing; my mother was not strong and the hard work of the farm was always too much for her delicate organization. Being of a vigorous constitution, I early came forward to lift a part of the burden from her precious shoulders. I cannot but think, from the vantage point of more than seventy years, that my choice was wise, even though I missed some things that might have broadened my social influence.

Father was fond of ancient languages, and since William showed real talent for the classics he desired his eldest-born to give a large share of his attention to language, though mathematics were not to be neglected. Father's idea was that after William had solid foundations laid in Greek and mathematics, then would come the time when he could take up German and French. Professor Klund, who had the chair of modern languages, was a fine teacher, speaking both German and French with great fluency, and altogether a scholar of marked ability. William was early drawn to him, and was dreaming with such anticipation of becoming his pupil that he bought a second-hand German grammar and started to study it before he had really entered the class in modern languages. One morning when called to breakfast we heard him spring out of bed reciting a lesson in German grammar. Thus we discovered that he was already engaged, with all the mental powers he possessed, in acquiring that language and its literature, which he learned to love and in time mastered.

On Saturdays the boys would haul wood either to the Cincinnati wood market or to some of father's personal friends in the city. In this way they added considerably to their fund of experience, as well as something to the family income. The great mathematician, Dr. Joseph Ray, was one of father's friends. His namesake, our younger brother, used to deliver wood at the home of the mathematician. One day the doctor noticed a young lad throwing off a load of wood on his grounds and asked if his name were not Joseph Ray Watkins. On



being informed that it was indeed his namesake, he brought out a complete set of his mathematical works and presented them to our brother. This was the first gift Joseph ever received from a friend outside his own family.

Hauling wood in the city of Cincinnati was not the easy job it might at first seem. Old black Nancy, one of the team driven by the boys, was addicted to bad fits of balking. Often when Joe mounted the load of a cold morning and gave the signal to start, Nance would throw herself back and stop stock still, while good and faithful Jane would be ready to take her share of the cords of four-foot wood which were loaded on for the wood market. After much whipping and ear-twisting in order to start her out of her tracks, the load would have to be thrown off, entirely or in part. On a winter morning this was no pleasant task and was a great annoyance to the boys; for the readjustment of the load would consume an hour or more of time, and this delay would bring them home late at night. With all this labor, our brothers found that the combination of study with outdoor life kept them in good health and spirits.

The two brothers passed their first six months at the College in hard work, but when spring came and the farm work was crowding, they came home to assist with the spring and summer toil. I recall how hard it was to take them out of school, and that father wrote a letter to Brother Joe's professor, thanking him for the good work he had done for his son; also I remember that when the reply came, Professor Waldron said that he regretted losing so attentive a student, and we all felt that Joseph had honored our family.

The years our brothers were in college brought much of interest which relieved and brightened the monotony of our lives. Brother Will joined the Burritt Literary Society, which was thought to be the most up to date; the Philomatheans were rather more noisy. The Burritts were proud of their finely furnished and spacious hall, which had upholstered hair-cloth sofas, a large chandelier, and fine platform furniture. Then, too, their library was something of which to be proud, and from it Will brought home books, the classics of the time. Among these were the works of Washington Irving, who was

ever held up to us as a master of English, the novels of Sir Walter Scott, "Homes and Haunts of the British Poets," and many other volumes which opened to us new realms of thought and fancy. I think these books were my awakening to literature; certainly they formed a real part in our education.

Our father was a man of letters and had, for that period, a fine library of theological works; but they were too solid for our young minds, and there came into this deep and sober selection of books a series we greatly enjoyed and shall never forget. They became a part of my father's library in this way: One evening when we were expecting father home from a tour, as usual Brother Will climbed to the roof of the barn to look off over the country for a sight of the carriage and horses — father's usual mode of conveyance if the journey were not too long. Sure enough, the welcome sight greeted his eyes, and soon we knew that he had brought us a store of delightful reading. It seems that on this itinerary he had met the celebrated Goodrich, known in that day as "Peter Parley," the great story-teller. He had just brought out a new edition of his schoolbooks, and as father was always interested in such matters, the author made him a present of the entire set of his works, with the request that he examine them and, should he find them worthy, review them favorably. Father did afterward write for publication concerning these instructive and entertaining books. "Peter Parley" certainly had a happy way of interesting both young and old in our day. This set of books contained school readers, from first to fifth; also a small history of North and South America, supposedly written by one "Dick, Bold Hero," who was fond of adventure and had made an extensive journey through South America, where he had many thrilling experiences with tornadoes and earthquakes. After numerous hairbreadth escapes he returned home and wrote this interesting account with the title "South America, by Dick, Bold Hero." There was a delightful volume of the "Natural History of Birds and Animals," with fine illustrations and descriptions of their habits and the countries where they are found; besides these books were two large histories, one of ancient, the other of modern times. They

were well bound and first-class in every way and gave us plenty of winter reading, both interesting and profitable. Our mother entertained us during her periods of rest by reading aloud to us from the "Natural History."

Our brothers boarded at home, and sometimes brought their chums to stay over Sunday with them, which filled the house with youth and merriment. There were entertainments at the close of each term; sometimes a play was given, sometimes orations by the brightest and best of the Burritts, for which the brass band from Newport barracks (a German band) or Madame Rive's music class from the female college just over the way furnished the musical features of the programmes. I cannot forbear to note in passing the term "female college," and to remark that in the days of which I am now writing the term "female" designated all the public or formal undertakings of womankind.

One of the bright days I remember was connected with the experimental farm. The ground embraced in this farm had been made very attractive — fields were laid off; drives and walks and landscape gardens with stream and rustic bridges diversified the appearance of the place; nature and art joined hands to beautify it. Investments had been made to bring about these conditions, and in order to introduce all the people about to the farm and school, a barbecue was announced at which a young steer was to be cooked. At first they decided to roast it, but later they thought it better to have it stewed in large iron kettles. The day was ideal, being a little cloudy in the morning, with a cool and refreshing breeze. It seems almost strange to myself that I remember so well the very atmosphere of that day in early September when the heat of the season had passed. As we approached the grounds we heard the roll of drums and the bugle call — the German Band of Newport was in fine form, and all was going merrily as a marriage bell. We had young visitors with us, Carrie and Chesterfield Myer, full of life and the romance of youth. Carrie was called the "Miami Valley Poetess" and was popularly known, admired and loved throughout her county (Warren). Chester was a bright young man who sometimes

wrote for the magazines. He had just bought a two-hundred-dollar, one-seated carriage in which both he and his sisters, Carrie and Lucy, could sit and have room to ride in comfort. They were taking care of some old relatives who owned a farm in Warren County which they were to inherit some time in the future.

Brother William and I had planned their visit as an event, and it gave us much happiness. Like other coming events we could not see what life was bringing them and us. They never married, and the bright trail of youthful hopes and aspirations that made them romantic characters faded into a shadow of disappointment and poverty. That day, however, we were happy-hearted and full of gay interest in the celebration. A procession was formed of carriages and horsemen, the rear being brought up by students and citizens. The attendance was large and enthusiastic; the speeches and music were of high order and the feast was bountiful. Under the lovely shade of the trees of the old academy campus the dinner was spread. I see the great platters of well-cooked beef in fine slices, as they circulated on the green; the fruits, preserves, pickles, and cake heaped on the long tables — it is all one of the unforgotten pictures of youth, and belonging to those antebellum days before the dark clouds of war swept over every scene in our land.

In looking back over more than fifty years I recall the death of one who was not only the first president of Farmers' College but who had also much to do with the development of our southern Ohio in all that pertains to culture and education — Dr. R. H. Bishop. In his youth he had come over the mountains to "grow up with the country;" he had been active in all the work connected with Farmers' College, and it was his pride and delight to see it growing in usefulness. I think he had filled the measure of life allotted to man, and upon a bright October day he left his lifelong work to other hands

Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch  
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

I think of the day Brother Will came home with a letter from Freeman Cary to father, asking him to be one of the pall-

bearers. Father wrote a dirge for the occasion. On that beautiful day in October, out where the seared and yellow leaves were drifting down, President Allen read the dirge at the mound as the draymen were bringing their loads of fresh earth to cover the mortal remains of this pioneer educator. These are the words written by our dear father:

#### A DIRGE OVER DR. R. H. BISHOP

Come, pile ye the mound, for the veteran has gone,  
Who came to our west in the springtime of youth;  
His pilgrimage with us was useful and long—  
A teacher of science, of wisdom and truth.  
His mound should be high in a beautiful spot,  
For high was his purpose and lofty his soul;  
His virtues shone bright in fulfilling his lot,  
But now he's transplanted beyond Time's control.  
Then bring the green sod and smooth over the grave,  
The grave of the noble, the kind, and the true,  
From the crown of the apex let evergreen wave  
And the tears of our young men the bright sod bedew!  
We'll remember his virtues, all frailties forget;  
His long, useful life richest blessings have crowned;  
And soothing the memory and fond the regret  
We shall feel as we gaze on this beautiful mound.

This production was published in a local paper and was much admired. Alas, how small the number who live to-day on College Hill who have ever known of this bit of college history! Should any of our family ever visit College Hill, let them not forget to inquire for the grave of Dr. Bishop. You will be taken through the college grounds down a little path into a secluded spot, where you will see among the natural growth of young trees a somewhat neglected mound where for a half century or more has reposed this scholar's dust. Only those whose memory reaches far back will recall the doctor's venerable appearance on those commencement days of long ago. He used to stand on the rostrum and lift his hand to call down God's blessing upon the large assembly of that day. He was a doctor of divinity and a man of rare culture.

When Dr. Bishop knew that his time of passing approached, he called his friend and requested that no monument should



be erected over him, only a mound of earth where he would have the trees, "whose leaves wither not," to commemorate what in life had been his purpose. It was this modest request that made our father write the ode as he did.

Very recently a publication of the Ohio Military Institute, which has taken the place of the old college, came into my hands through the courtesy of the superintendent, Colonel Henshaw. It says of Farmer's College that its history goes back almost to the beginnings of education in the West. I quote the following from *The Sentinel*:

Farmers' College was one of the first institutions of higher culture established beyond the mountains. It had a long and useful career. The roster of its former students contains the names of President Benjamin Harrison, Murat Halstead, the great editor, and Bishop John M. Walden of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Unfortunately Farmers' College was projected a generation too soon for permanent success. The community had not yet grown up to the ideas that inspired the enterprise. To quote the language of a very old letter used in the early propaganda, "The distinctive feature of Farmers' College is the *practical character* of its course of instruction . . . to qualify our youth for a higher position in any of the industrial pursuits." The idea thus expressed is to-day the most powerful force directing the trend of thought in education.

Some years ago, while we were on our way home from the South with Brother Joe, we planned to include in our trip Cincinnati and its environs and to spend a little time in the city, on College Hill and out in the old home neighborhood. It was the springtime — May in southern Ohio — when Nature was just presenting herself in her most attractive garb. College Hill is located in accordance with its name; the ascent begins at Mill Creek Valley, and conjecturing I should say that for a distance of two miles the way is one continuous climb.

The country for the most part is hilly and broken up into long spurs and slopes interspersed by misty valleys, blue in the distance. On that day green young groves holding flowering shrubs such as redbud and dogwood flung out arms of beauty, while wild phlox, violets, anemones, and spring beauties spread a carpet on the ground. The air had all the



delicious fragrance of spring; balmy breezes were stirring among the freshly unfolding beech and maple leaves, and as our trolley car mounted higher new scenes of beauty met our delighted eyes.

The approach to the town brought to our memories the joys of our youth. The home of Brother Will's best beloved, Professor Klund, was standing as it did fifty years ago; the trees of his own planting and vines and choice roses were still bordering walks along the terrace. I learned that his daughter Julia had inherited his scholarly mind and had been an active teacher, as was her father.

We found no hotel in the village, so we went out some distance into the country to a German hotel, and took in some of the paths of our earlier days. On the pike which connected the town of College Hill with that of Mount Healthy we found this German hotel, clean and nicely kept; but when we discovered that it was a resort for beer-drinkers I could but feel humiliated to stop there. It was convenient to the places we wished to visit, however, so from there we went to Mount Pleasant and found one of our old schoolmates and neighbors, Clara Van Zandt, the only surviving one of that large family of twelve children. Hiring a carriage we also visited our old neighborhood; but this belongs to another chapter, and I only bring it in here to tell of Brother Joe's finding his way on foot to College Hill from there. He wished to cross the fields as of old and take the near cut from our sometime home to the college. He thought to visit on the road an old schoolmate, Miss Jessup, a beauty in her time, who was living in an old tumble-down house not far away. He found the ancient and neglected places silent; the old occupant was deaf or taking her nap, or perhaps out cutting grass for her two cows, her only property. I feel confident that my brother had a surprise for the poor old lady in his pocketbook that day, for though he never posed as such, he could play the "fairly prince" with a grace all his own, bringing comfort and happiness where they were little expected because their calls had grown so infrequent. When it was too late we learned that Miss Jessup had been taken to an asylum for the insane, and we both regretted the

ending of a life whose morning had portended naught but brightness.

Together brother and I went about for the last time over College Hill, just before we passed on our way. We discovered that the old academy had been taken down; the lovely shade trees of long ago had vanished; a church, no longer new, occupied the old site. The landscape from this vantage ground had always filled us with delight; so I found a good point of observation, and while many old scenes were blotted out, I found that new cities had come to view. Looking south there arose a line of encircling hills as a wall. In the days of our youth we thought these hills a barrier which would hedge forever the city of Cincinnati; but to my astonishment I saw that it had boiled over, and on the north side of the hill there stood out in bold relief a fair and beautiful city. It showed well laid out streets, large factories, schools and churches, beside great blocks of red brick buildings. Here too we saw the large cemetery of the St. Bernard Catholic Church. The declining sun shone upon its hundreds of white marble slabs, and I could but recall the years when it was a much smaller ground. I thought, too, of the destructive war which had added so greatly to the extent of churchyard resting-places. The hilly places, once thought to have no value, were covered with the ever-toiling commerce of nations; thousands from the Old World had, through long years of exhausting labor, built this new city and peopled it with industrious and prosperous inhabitants. As in many another place in our young land, the toilers had laid the foundations for oncoming generations, to make life easier for their children than theirs had been in their early days.

As we were taking our last walk through the grounds of Farmers' College Joe walked up to a citizen and asked him a number of questions, and was much interested to find he was talking with his old college chum, Ed Wild. Thus they met after the lapse of a long lifetime, and but to part, never to meet here again. We found the military school occupying the old college building. Cannon were planted on the campus; the grass had been covered with gravel for a parade

ground; the lovely shade trees had disappeared, and we three, Brother Joe and Alvah and I, were walking over this place so alive to every memory of our earlier days. As we looked about us for familiar and remembered sights, a young cadet came forward and offered to show us over the grounds. We told him something of what the place had meant to us in our youth and of the grand work done by Farmers' College in antebellum days.

Once again we walked up the stone steps — two pilgrims with snow-white hair and steps a little measured as the elasticity of youth had departed. We found the chapel dismantled, but still there were the picture of Freeman Cary and the life-size portrait of Dr. Bishop. The rostrum was there, but silent and deserted was the place where Madame Rive's music class had stood and filled the air with sweet sound. I seemed all at once to see the emptiness there peopled with those lovely girls as they appeared on great occasions. They passed before our fancy arrayed in white, with garlands of rose leaves fastened together to imitate the Grecian Muses. What a picture of classical beauty they made in thin flowing robes with those garlands of green on their white brows, and now they are but a dream, a memory! We stood a while longer in front of that stage and called up in grand review the scenes the place brought so vividly to mind — they came and disappeared again from sight, phantoms of what had been so long ago engulfed in the ever-rolling tide of time.

The Civil War seems to have had a part in the downfall of this work so prosperously begun. We walked over Freeman Cary's beautiful grounds and looked upon the palatial home he built; upon the landscape garden once the admiration of my youth; and while yet beautiful, all showed that Time had touched them and would eventually conquer, which is the destiny of the proudest monuments of earth.

While wandering along the paths of our youth, I inquired of a guide for the Cary sisters' old home, for I remembered "the brown old homestead" as it used to rear its walls "from the village dust aloof." Its picture was imprinted upon my childhood memory. As I recall it now, it stood on the maca-

dam pike about halfway between College Corners and Mount Healthy, and my memory pictures it as I saw it as we were driving to church one rainy Sunday. We had the carriage curtains drawn, and I opened a little peephole and took in a view of that "brown old homestead" and the apple tree which "would almost cast its foliage on the roof."

The poetesses were cousins of Freeman and Sam Cary. The latter was the once well-known temperance lecturer of southern Ohio. Some of Phœbe and Alice Cary's songs are still in our hymn-books and are yet a delight and comfort — such as "A day's march nearer home." While I was still a child they went east and remained there the rest of their lives, and when we were on College Hill no one could point out even the spot where they had lived; in fact, I heard conflicting stories as to its place — some declared the old brick house near the College Corners was the home they left and that the one they called "the brown old homestead" had disappeared. The home they immortalized in "Clovernook" is pictured in *The Sentinel* as it is to-day.

Freeman Cary was a man of fine social powers and great discernment. He could read character and had studied to know boy life, and he succeeded in understanding in a most remarkable manner different kinds of boys. He knew every boy in Farmers' College. I remember at one time they had matriculated three hundred in the fall term, and I think I am right in asserting that in six months President Cary could tell the standing, both mental and moral, of every boy there. He had a fine face, full of benevolence. Pioneer life had made him manly and self-reliant, and all who knew him were his friends. He was an enthusiast in his work for our youth and did much to dignify labor.

As we passed through the streets of Cummingsville, brother pointed out to me a level spot of perhaps an acre of ground just freshly broken up and asked me if I recognized the place. There was nothing to identify it, and I looked with puzzled eyes when he said, "That is where Hoffner had his garden." Ah, what a rare day it was in the long ago when we young people were told that we might take our friends to visit Hoff-

ner's garden! Sadly did I recall the vision of loveliness which commercial greed had literally wiped from the earth. Where were the hundreds of works of art which Mr. Hoffner had, through a long life of extensive travel, gathered from the four corners of the earth?

The garden, as I remember, occupied a prominent place in the suburbs of Cincinnati, on a rise of ground sloping both north and south, and where there was a perennial spring which sent forth limpid waters carried through pipes to a fountain. The fountain was a large dolphin carved from stone, and the waters from the spring filled, with many pleasant murmurs, a basin large enough to be called a pool. A multitude of gold fish flashed like living jewels in this pool; some were blood-red with black tails and fins, and as the variegated bits of life darted here and there they were as fascinating to me as crown jewels could ever be. Curious stones were set in rugged designs about the margin, and a weeping willow bent over until its swaying branches touched the crystal water and brushed the snow-white water lilies that rested on the surface of the pool. Rustic seats were placed about under the drooping tree, where visitors could rest and admire this garden of delights.

To us it was an education in the beautiful in art and nature. To wander over the grounds could but suggest the wealth and culture of Mr. Hoffner, for they were a storehouse of sculpture. Greek gods and goddesses glistened white amongst the trees. Mercury, with winged feet, was poised with one foot on the pedestal and one in air, ready for flight; Pan with his pipes played underneath a bough; but now all were gone! It was Brother William who used to guide us through the grounds and tell us the stories of classical mythology represented in the beautiful statuary there. I missed the marble figures glancing through the green, with something like a pang of heart.

In the old days, three large greenhouses occupied a prominent place; one was reserved for cacti in all their rare and grotesque forms; another was for members of the lily family and other lovely flowers and plants; while the third was filled



with a wonderful Spanish grapevine, which ran rampant through the large building, furnishing fruit in abundance. An old English gardener bestowed all his time on trimming and caring for the grounds. He had assistants, for it took three men just to pick up the fallen leaves under the great willow tree, everything was kept up with such exquisite attention.

In the springtimes of the past all the earliest blooming plants were to be found in Hoffner's gardens. There for the first time I saw mountain pinks used as borders to beds of early bulbs. What a delicate filigree of blossom they spread about the tulips and hyacinths; how I admired the carpet of pink loveliness they spread on the grass! In autumn again there was another picture of beauty, for there I caught my first view of the blazing salvia bloom.

Within the enclosure of the grounds was a strip of woodland in all its uncultivated wildness, with a beautiful, wide avenue which wound in and out among the trees until it came to a terminus in a rustic summer house. When we were last there we should not have dreamt that there had ever really been on that uneven ground a walk as smooth as a house floor winding through a quiet greenery, and that once a summer-house, with thatched roof and covered with vines, invited the wayfarer to a seat beneath its shadow or beckoned young love to dream in an ideal spot. In one lone corner was a life-sized bust supported on a pedestal, which Will called "The Hermit." Here among the overhanging branches, in summer showers or winter storms, we could see the drooping, weather-worn features of this solitary hermit; and now, how different — only an ugly waste of upturned ground, ready for the foundations of walls of light-expelling brick!

I looked in vain for the life-sized lions of marble which guarded the front entrance to the grounds, and whose glint of newness is a part of my youthful vision of the garden. In my girlhood they were there, with great paws resting on a white marble globe and in a half couchant position, as though in wild play they would roll the ball were it not placed on a marble slab. At the east gate were great marble eagles, with wings spread as though in contemplation of flight; they too were



gone, as if the earth had opened up and swallowed them from sight. For a moment I thought: "Am I Rip Van Winkle?" Along the broken way Italian workmen sat eating their dinners, redolent of garlic; and about us all the ground lay "in one long term of stagnant desolation!" We were later told that a Jew had bought up these lots which had been Hoffner's garden and had carted off the works of art and broken the ground for an extensive factory; and so with disappointment we turned from this ruin — as complete as was the ancient destruction of Jerusalem, not one stone being left upon another.

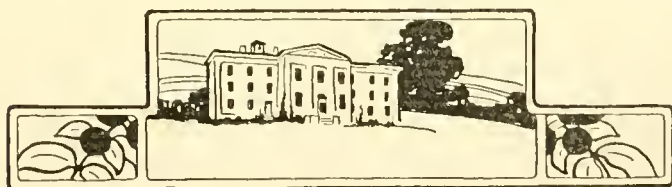
Not satisfied, we went over to Spring Grove Cemetery, where stood the tomb Hoffner had built in the palmy days of his strong manhood. We found the hand of time had done its work here, too. In our childhood the cemetery had been enclosed by an osage orange hedge, and this was kept well trimmed and was a covert from the storm for many dear little birds that built their nests and reared their young there; but I suppose even the memory of that hedge has perished, and perhaps also of the sharp picket fence which succeeded it. At the time of our visit a high solid board fence kept out intruders. The principal entrance was more imposing than in the old days, and I thought as I looked upon it once more of the hundreds and thousands of funeral trains of coaches and horses which had passed through those portals; indeed, through the years they have been of almost hourly occurrence, and the tolling of the bell by the gatekeeper has echoed for most of the hours of light in mournful cadence amongst the hills.

I well remember the first monuments erected and the laying out of the beautiful avenues and landscape gardens of this largest and probably most picturesque cemetery in the world. I have kept watch of this beautiful city of the dead through all the years of my life, noting its changes. Once I visited it when it was customary to place flowers and little mementoes on the grave. There were the doll house and empty chair and picture of the departed; there, too, one often saw the marbles and the bat and ball the little boy left with his play. Amongst the poor, who had an extensive burial ground on the first bench of the valley, were most touching memorials speak-

ing much in their mute language of grief and desolation. I find this is all prohibited now in Spring Grove Cemetery.

We went to see Hoffner's tomb, built by him some sixty-five years ago. I remember well the beauty of its polished marble columns and statuary when it was new. These columns form into an arch above a statue of Flora, the goddess of flowers, and through all the long years the graceful figure has stood under this canopy with her apron full of flowers. The bud which had fallen to the ground was in memory of an adopted daughter of the Hoffners who had passed away in the springtime of life and lay beneath the figure of Flora. The recumbent lions at the entrance of the Hoffner tomb had been "restored," for the action of fifty winters had changed the smooth surface of the marble and great cracks had been made in their unconscious figures. It gave me another pang to note that the beautiful polished marble of Italy had been repaired by laying on cement in the depressions and cracks. There were no descendants to keep up the beauty of those arts so loved by the ones who rested in this conspicuous tomb.

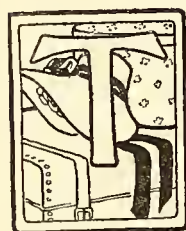
Many of our old neighbors and schoolmates lie buried in Spring Grove. Familiar names — McCash, Van Zandt and others — are inscribed there, and the dates on the stones tell us the days of our youth are far away. We pass along and find vines running in tangled masses over many a memorial stone; we step out and away, and youth and all its interests are but memories, like the marbles that glint in beautiful Spring Grove Cemetery.





## CHAPTER X

### THE GREEN TREE TAVERN



THE Green Tree Tavern had such a part in the life of the elder brother of our family that I feel it deserves a chapter by itself. It has interest also as an example of the old-time tavern at the crossroads.

We all felt that it was a matter for regret that in William's senior year he had dropped out of college of his own free will. This act may have been occasioned by a desire to begin the activities of a profession he had been planning to follow for years — that of teaching. Although father was in close circumstances, he was anxious, as were we all, that William should finish his course. True, his scholarly attainments were equal to the best in his class and in time brought the reward they so justly merited, for he was granted the degree of Master of Arts by Farmer's College in after years. On coming home, he had his text-books and was busy every spare moment from the farm work in the most diligent study to prepare himself for teaching. During his college life he had neglected the common branches, but being a good student he was soon ready for the teacher's examination, and passed triumphantly.

Now, the next thing was to procure a school. At a place some twenty miles north of us was a small village called Clio, now Ferry, where there was a church to which father ministered

at intervals. On one of his visits he found a Brother Isaac Morris (we always knew each other as "brother" and "sister" in the church fellowship of those days), who was a member of the church at Clio. He lived fifteen miles away, but was at church on preaching days and invited father home with him. Brother Morris kept the Green Tree House at the crossroads just in the edge of a settlement of Shakers; in fact, their land joined his on the south. The Green Tree was on the direct road to our place, something over a half day's drive, so father was glad to avail himself of this invitation and to extend his acquaintance among the people of the church. I cannot recall just how it all came about, but anyway Mr. Morris offered their neighborhood school to William, and as soon as arrangements could be made he was to begin. When father went to his next appointment at Clio he took William over; our mother went along that time, and it was thus our eldest, with his well-filled trunk, set out to begin his life work as teacher.

When our parents returned it was to tell us how pleased they were with William's location. They described the old-fashioned brick house, a large square building with a wide hall going through the center, with two rooms on either side of it. This old tavern, they told us, was two stories high, with oaken floors. Ah, I can yet hear the clatter and the echo of the boys' heavy boots resounding on the uncarpeted floor of that wide hall! More than fifty years have passed, bleaching the hair once so abundant and dark and dulling the ears no longer young, but still the echoes of the past ring out more clearly than any sound of to-day.

On learning of all the interesting features of the Green Tree, we three younger children were told that we might go to see William in his new abode, and as I now recall, I think we were to take up some things our mother had finished off for him. It was the first time we children had ever gone visiting at a distance without some of our elders. I am looking back and thinking how we made plans for this visit and dreamed day and night of it. The day before we started father made a map of our journey, giving the directions of our course and telling of the one diverging road where we would find a guide-

post to tell us which way to take. As we proceeded on our way we found it all plain, and after we had reached the guide-post anxiety departed and we settled down to enjoy the new things we saw all about us. Passing from the level country we found we were in sight of the large and imposing buildings of the Shaker settlement. Some time in the year 1700 they had found this rich country a wild tract of native forest, and made a home where they could worship according to the dictates of their own consciences, having like our Puritan fathers fled from persecution in England. One of the Shaker songs expresses their origin thus:

'Twas in Manchester in England  
The flaming truth began,  
Where Christ made His appearing  
In blessed Mother Ann.  
A few at first received it  
And did their lusts forsake,  
And soon their testimony  
Brought on a mighty shake!

This was a long rhyme concerning Ann Lee, whom her followers believed a second appearance of Christ who had come to women. There was much that was fanatical in their beliefs. They ignored the family relation; as worship they danced, the elders singing a jig song to which they kept step. They owned some of the finest land in Warren County, and built good, substantial brick houses, for which they themselves made the brick. Everything was of the best as to material and condition; their farms and groves were beautiful and perfectly kept; their houses were exquisitely neat and clean, floors painted and varnished, with strips of rag carpet laid down to protect them; in every department there was perfect order and perfect cleanliness. There was nothing bright about their furnishings or their dress; everything was plain. They made Shaker bonnets for women and braided broad-brimmed hats for men; these latter were of such exceeding fineness that once when a young man asked, in my hearing, the price of such a hat, he was told that they were not for sale, but if they were their price would be eight dollars. The Shaker women,





Isaac Morris



Margaret Morris



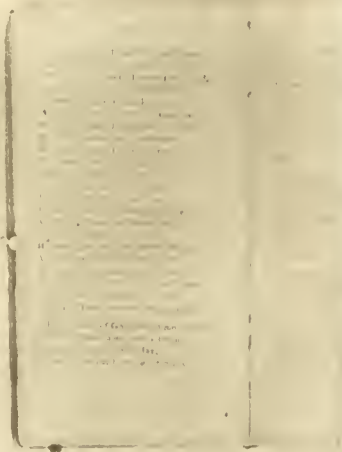
Benjamin Morris





I set every word of this book  
from the manuscript and  
with my brother's help, printed it,  
I never got my pay  
Isaac Morris  
Jan 21 '80 80<sup>th</sup> Boston

Fly Leaf of White Pilgrim



Page of White Pilgrim



however, evidently could not forego the opportunity of setting the fashion, and Shaker bonnets were sold for fifty and seventy-five cents apiece and were much worn. The colony had woolen mills and made Shaker flannel in great quantities. As all their manufactured products were honest and good, they were very popular. They had an extensive trade in garden seeds, for there was a ready sale for anything having the Shaker stamp. They were certainly an industrious and thrifty people.

Though they did not marry, their settlement was kept going for some time by the orphaned and homeless they continued to receive. It was but the other day (March, 1912) that one of the Morris family wrote me that there was yet a remnant of the Shakers in existence, though only about nineteen out of the three or four hundred in old times. All but one of their villages is deserted. The Shakers remaining all live in their Uniontown, ride in their \$7,000 automobile, and dress like the "world's people." Tenants live in their emptied houses and raise fine stock for them on shares. Only two of these Shakers, we hear, are under sixty-five years of age. The oldest of their buildings were erected in about 1807 or 1808, and the settlement began some time between 1803 and 1805.

Upon our way to Green Tree that autumn afternoon so long ago, we passed through the main street of Shakertown; another short turn and we saw the Green Tree House itself and the large cedar tree for which it was named. I wonder if it stands as of old in all its perennial verdure, a shelter for the winter birds whose ancestors hid from storms in its thick branches. Upon reaching the gate of the tavern we found our friends the Morrises, but William had not yet returned from school.

Soon after our arrival, and having had a good, warm dinner, the family began to gather around their ample hearth to give us greeting. School was out, and William was glad to see us. It is true that when he was a lad of seven he had spent a winter with our father away from home in Meigs County, Ohio, while father was teaching a grammar school there, but since then we had not known what it was to be

separated for more than a day or two at a time, and so we found this reunion all the more full of joy. In looking back over those far-away days, now more than half a century ago, I understand how important was this period in the life of our elder brother.

We found the Morris family a leading one of that country. Mr. Isaac Morris was a man who by honesty and industry had improved his inheritance. The Green Tree Tavern had stood for a number of years then, having been built in 1832 by one Ichabod Corwin and sold by him to Nathan Sharp. The latter had been one of the head Shakers and privileged to wear an eight-dollar hat, but tradition tells us he departed from the colony with money enough to buy the Green Tree, and it was he who sold it to Mr. Isaac Morris. The first Isaac Morris was a wagonmaster general in the Continental Army. He removed with his family from Morris County, New Jersey, when Benjamin Morris, the father of the master of Green Tree, was fourteen years old. It may be interesting to note here that both the Morris and Watkins families came to southern Ohio from New Jersey, though Isaac Morris the first preceded our grandfather, James Watkins, by two years in his emigration from that state. This Morris ancestor took up a considerable body of land from government; at the time of our visit the original property was owned by the North family of Shakers. Great-grandfather Isaac Morris was an ardent man, passionate and excitable and very religious, formerly a Presbyterian but later becoming a member of the religious body called "New Lights" or "Bible Christians," though they preferred the simple designation "Christian." It is said that he became so strongly opposed to Calvinism that he wanted his grandson Isaac to write an article against the Apostle Paul for being a Calvinist! His wife, Rebecca Hathaway Morris, was a woman of moderate stature and remembered as very industrious. She died on the property afterwards owned by the Shakers, and was eighty years of age at the time of her death.

When we were at Green Tree, Grandfather Benjamin Morris was living there. I remember him as a small, dark,

active old man who was very decided in his opinions. He had various pet aversions, one of which was beards; he declared men with beards looked like baboons. A fashion of women he particularly disliked was the wearing of hoops. Though so pronounced in his opinions, he was ever kind and hospitable, generous and obliging, an upright and honest citizen. Brother William puts it on record that he was a quiet and peaceable man. He was born in Morris County, New Jersey, February 20, 1774. He helped to build the block house at Fort Washington when but sixteen years old. It is told of him that he could load logs a foot over his own head. Benjamin Morris served as a packhorse man in Wayne's army about 1795. Mary Spinning, his wife, was born in Elizabethtown, New Jersey. She was a woman of small stature, not larger than her granddaughter, Julia Morris. Indeed, my brother William has recorded that his wife, her father, grandfather, grandmother and great-grandfather were all small, so it is not difficult to account for the short stature of the Morris-Watkins children. Our maternal grandfather Skeels was also under medium height. Mary Spinning was brought up two miles west of Lebanon on the Green Tree Road. She was not the first wife of Benjamin Morris, he having married, while very young, a girl by the name of Ticknor. This first wife and their one child died early from smallpox. It was the second wife, Mary Spinning, who became the mother of his ten children. It might be well to note right here that upon the Watkins side our great-grandfather, Joseph Watkins, married Elizabeth Spinning, also of Elizabethtown, New Jersey, as related in our first chapter, and my father always said the Morris and Watkins families must be at least distantly related.

Isaac Morris' grandfather, Matthias Spinning, and his brothers fought all through the Revolutionary War, and after it was over Matthias Spinning came to Ohio with his family. This was in 1791 or 1792, and near Lebanon he purchased from the government a farm which is now known as the Thompson Farm. He lived and died on this place. His daughter Jerusha, known to us as "Aunt 'Rusha," was born in the Block House (Fort Washington) at Cincinnati. Mary Spin-



ning Morris died in 1838, having had for years serious trouble with her eyes, which resulted finally in blindness. She was sixty-four years old when she died.

The third marriage of Grandfather Benjamin Morris was a great surprise to the family. His eldest daughter, Sallie, married a man by the name of Yeager and went to Tennessee to live. Grandfather Morris decided to go to visit this daughter, and so for a time he left Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Morris, who were then keeping house for him. What was their surprise one summer day on looking down the road, to see a strange procession approaching — Grandfather Benjamin Morris and a new wife, riding in on packhorses quite unannounced! The great heat and dust almost disguised both bride and groom. I heard Miss Jerusha Spinning tell of the shock it was to them all. I gather it was a bitter disappointment to Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Morris. They had rented the home farm from his father and were permanently settled, as they supposed, and here came the unexpected in the form of the newly wedded pair, blistered by the sun and soiled by the dust and quite ready to settle down in the house the son was so happily occupying. There was nothing to do but for Mr. Isaac Morris to move out of the brick house, and this he did, purchasing the Green Tree Tavern and re-establishing his home there.

When the wife from Tennessee died Benjamin Morris went to live once more with his son Isaac, and so he was at Green Tree when we visited the family there. He was an old man of eighty then, I should judge. I remember the brick house he had built in an early day; the shade trees he had planted in his prime and which protected the front of the house from the afternoon sunshine; the orchards still bearing fine apples—the scene of his life's work. As I rode by his old home with him one day, he pointed out to me the barn and told me that when it was in the course of erection his younger son, a lad in his teens, had climbed on a ladder to the roof and had fallen from there and broken his hip. Despite the best medical aid of that time lockjaw set in and the boy died. His voice trembled as he related the story, the sadness of which the years had failed to obliterate.

Little is known of the parents of Mrs. Margaret Morris. Brother William affirmed that her father was a "litigious man and greatly impaired his fortune by law suits." Her mother died about 1823, and is said to have been a German; as they lived in Pennsylvania, where Mrs. Morris was born, this is probably true. Mrs. Morris' maiden name was Chambers.

As I recall each member of that family living in Green Tree Tavern, I see first the mother, Margaret Chambers Morris, a woman of small, trim figure — five feet in height, I should judge. She had dark brown hair and eyes, and her complexion indicated liver trouble, as it was quite sallow. She was an industrious woman of fine executive ability. Her larder was always full and she was ready to spread her table with good victuals at short notice, so the Green Tree was pretty sure to please its patrons. She was a skillful needlewoman, making all the girls' dresses. I can yet see how she used to gather Alice's skirts, scraping the thick gathers and backstitching them on the waists. She did with her might what her hands found to do, and taught her daughters to be good housekeepers. Julia, the eldest child, was at that time twenty-five years old. She, too, was a small woman and had abundant brown hair, which she parted from the front down to the nape of her neck, thus dividing her whole hair into two coils which covered the back of her round head. Her face, too, was round and she had a fine countenance, although not what all would call beautiful. Her eyes were brown and intelligent, her small figure neat and well proportioned. Alice was but a child in years but was a real help to her mother, having inherited the unusual executive ability possessed by that mother; I think I never noticed this trait more evident in a girl of her age. Clarinda, the youngest, usually called "Kin," was about ten years old when I was there; she seemed to me to resemble her mother in appearance. Julia looked like her father, as did the sons, John and Albert, who were just coming into young manhood and were full of fun and frolic. They helped their father in the conduct of the farm and seemed to take an interest in it.

The attic of Green Tree, as I remember it, was a most inter-

esting place and typical of a prosperous, old-fashioned home. To me it seemed a regular "old curiosity shop." There we found three or four flax wheels — those small, low wheels — also big, high wheels for spinning woolen yarn, reels for winding thread, and all appliances for the domestic art of spinning and weaving so well known to our mothers. I remember to have seen the remnant of an old loom up there upon which they wove, in the long ago, those wonderful coverlids. What works of art they were where our grandmothers wove in their longings for home decoration! What houses, trees and flowers grew with their swiftly flying shuttles! They wove their names and perhaps the date of their accomplishment upon the borders of these coverlids. They were mostly blue and white or madder red and white; all the colors were of domestic making, and each woman had her dye-pot for coloring large quantities of yarn. I can remember ours, from which mother would take as much as a tubful of yarn at a time. Much ingenuity was required in housekeepers of those days — ingenuity and skill; each home was a little factory.

The Morris mothers for generations had been known for their thrift and in the old attic it did not require great stretch of imagination to picture Grandmother Benjamin Morris before a blazing, open fire, one foot on the cradle rocker, rocking her son Isaac to sleep, the other on the treadle of the spinning wheel, while with her free hands she drew the fiber from the distaff. All this time her mind was free to plan her work, and so mentally, we fancy, she counted the number of towels, linen sheets and pillow cases she would need for the coming spring. She must also spin fine thread for her sewing and card and spin wool for stocking yarn as well as for the flannel and cloth for fulling she must weave. I imagine, too, that as she spun she studied on what colors would be best for the girls' dresses and her own. Besides, she must plan for a lot of blankets and coverlids. These latter she thinks she will make with a border of pine trees; the center will be either flowers or stars.

The wheels were all silent in the attic, but they spoke of the industrious life of the Morris mother; and looking back over all the years we recall that she died of exhaustion at the



Spinning Wheel of Margaret Morris



age of sixty-four, having suffered so much with her eyes that she went blind. Her wonderful industry, her night vigils with sick children in her large family, her unceasing care, make this mild-tempered little grandmother well worthy of memory even to many generations. It is fitting that we give Mary Spinning Morris something more than passing notice. Transplanted early from her peaceful New Jersey home into the wilderness of Ohio; obliged at first to live in a fort; married young — what experiences were hers! She was five feet in height and slightly built, but of such a mind that Uncle John Hunt was used to say that if the children of Benjamin Morris displayed any unusual brightness it should be accredited to his wife. When we recall the toils and hardships incident to the building up of the great commonwealth of our beloved Ohio, we should think not only of the fathers, but of the part such mothers as Mary Morris played in its early development. You, her great-grandchildren, may rightly be proud of the work to which she gave her life. She is of a type of which there are none remaining. We find some of her characteristics in Proverbs 31: "She seeketh wool and flax and worketh willingly with her hands. She riseth early while it is yet night and giveth meat to her household. She openeth her mouth with wisdom and in her tongue is the law of kindness. Her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hand to the spindle, her hand holdeth the distaff."

Mary Spinning Morris passed on, but when I was at Green Tree there was still her daughter, Jerusha Morris Hunt, who lived near at Red Lion and whom I came to know so well. In her large family of good children Mary Morris lives with us still. You who own her little spinning wheels should not forget the story of the hands so long folded to rest.

There were in this attic some boxes of things Mr. Morris had used when he taught school, for he had been a teacher and a printer in his time. This recalls to me an old book now in the possession of his grandson, Paul Watkins, called "The White Pilgrim," which I believe Isaac Morris himself printed. There were also trunks up there containing, amongst other things, old clothes, some of them very ancient garments. One



day I happened to look out to the gate of Green Tree, when my eyes beheld a couple of strange objects, and I called to Aunt 'Rusha Spinning to inquire what it all meant. She laughed and told me that Kin and a Fitzgerald girl had been visiting the attic and were "dressed up" and out for a walk, probably bound for "Red Lion." They were called back, however, and returned reluctantly — absurd little figures in old-fashioned long skirts and shawls, while upon their heads were cast-off straw bonnets long out of date. How quaint their faces looked in those old flaring bonnets with ancient baize veils and decorations of wild flowers!

Grandfather Benjamin Morris was not at home when we were there that time; when at the Green Tree he occupied the back room downstairs. The first evening of our visit Julia built a fire there in the great open fireplace and we young people gathered about it. I see again the play of light and shadow on the old-time furniture of grandfather's room, the high-post, corded bedstead with its hand-woven, woolen coverlid, fringed all around — in what solemn stateliness it stood waiting for its old occupant to come back! Everything about us was of the long ago, but we were young and merry. John and Albert brought out apples to warm before the blazing fire and popped corn where corn pops best — over the coals of a wide, old-fashioned fireplace. How the flames shot up the old black back wall in use for so many winters! Again they flickered over the ancient furnishings but left the remote corners in deep shadow. Little wonder that Grandfather Benjamin Morris had visions of horses and riders prancing through his room! It is true, however, that he ceased to tell what he saw in the shadows when he gave up the use of tobacco, to which he had been immoderately addicted.

Julia sat sewing with her busy fingers, seldom idle in this large family in the days when all the sewing was done at home by hand. William read aloud to us, and when at his best he was most entertaining. His knowledge of authors and his apt quotations from them, his store of amusing anecdotes and illustrations, not only entertained but instructed us as well. The others were gay of heart and some were quick at repartee,

and in the case of at least one pair, young eyes spoke to other eyes which answered back again. It was just the beginning of the love story between our elder brother and bright-eyed Julia Morris. I cannot remember that I had any suspicion of what was to be at that time.

I think Brother William had much of our father's strong nature, both intellectually and socially. At home we learned to love literature and poetry especially, for father was of a highly poetical nature, loving particularly grand and sublime diction. He used to read aloud to mother any choice bit he found in his reading. She enjoyed hearing him declaim in that clear, sonorous voice of his, and declared she never knew how much there was in a poem until she had heard our father read it. I now think we had rare opportunities, for our day, in that we usually heard good diction in our own home. Even in these days of superior advantages the correct speaking of our language is almost rare, and in our youth the opportunities for hearing it were indeed few; but as our father commonly read aloud and declaimed the best and purest of English, I like to think it gave us a better habit of speech. I shall never hear again anyone read David's Psalms with the power and feeling of my father. Indeed I have not at any time in my life heard them read as he could read them.

The young voices that sounded in grandfather's room are always silent now or have lost their youthful buoyancy. The freedom and gayety of spirit were long ago subdued. Little Kin no longer darts out at the sound of small, sharp hoofs on the stair. The naughty pet lambs used often to spy the open door and ascend the stairs in search of mischief. They were twins and kept Kin on the alert, for they were noted for chewing curtains and bedclothes. When she went after them they ran precipitately down the oaken stairway, making enough noise for a dozen lambs. I heard they had finally to be banished to the pasture.

Saturday brought a half holiday for the boys and after dinner they began to wash and dress in their best to go down to Lebanon, five miles distant. If they were ever found in bad company I never knew it. As I remember, it was Saturday

when we went over to Waynesville and found the Myers family, who were mutual friends of ours and the Morris. We had a pleasant time with them; they were among William's literary friends. They knew more of books and poetry than they did of the practical business of life. We stayed over Sunday with them, and on Monday morning it took them about two hours to get breakfast, so our start back to the Green Tree was late. On returning, when I greeted Mrs. Morris with "Good morning," she told me it was afternoon. We were to return home that day, so we had a lunch, fed our horses and started with all haste, for we knew how anxiously our parents would look for us. Before we reached home it had begun to grow dark, and as we came dragging in we found our dear father at the gate, having heard the approach of our wheels as they rumbled over the frozen ground. Mother had a good, warm supper waiting, for which we were ready with keenest appetite. They were eager to hear the recital of our experience and we enjoyed the telling.

The summer after William taught school in the neighborhood of Green Tree, Julia Morris, who was to become our sister in October, came to visit us. Our parents were quite desirous to know more of the one who was so soon to become a member of our family group, so William was to visit Green Tree and bring Julia home with him. We were well pleased at the prospect of this visit, and she was a much anticipated guest. It was the summer of 1858. Mother was a woman of many cares, and that summer the work had accumulated on her hands, so it seemed good to her to find in her prospective daughter-in-law a willing helper. Among other pieces of work a quilt was to be quilted and was placed in the frames upstairs; I think Julia herself did every stitch of that task, when quilting was a fine art and very elaborate. In other ways the little woman lightened our burdens during that visit. How the weeks did fly for the lovers — how they dreamed love's golden dream, looking for a future full of happiness! They felt no forebodings of coming ill, so entirely lost were they in mutual love and devotion. At this distance, since the history of our elder brother and his wife is closed, I see the

stage is swept, the curtain draped and new actors are claiming our attention. I think it is well that our lovers, so young and devoted, at that time knew naught of life's ills. As I swiftly review in memory their walk together, it is good to recall that while sorrow and bereavement passed them not by, their share was not more than usually falls to the lot of mortals here in this world where we are all promised tribulation.

Swiftly did the summer speed away, all too swiftly; but the coming events kept the time filled with anticipation for the young lovers who were planning their life together with rapturous delight. The event of events was to occur on brother's twenty-second birthday. During this interval an old and loved friend of our youth, James Henry, came to continue a short revival in our Carthage church. Brother William talked it over with his affianced, and she, being a devoted member of the Christian Church, urged him to respond to the invitation of the Gospel, which he did at once and was immersed after the evening service. As he came up out of the water they sang the familiar

"How happy are they who their Saviour obey  
And have laid up their treasures above."

Our parents were indeed rejoiced to have all their children in the church.

October in southern Ohio is thought to be the most desirable season of the whole year. The heat of summer has passed and the September rains have revived the meadows and pastures; the first frosts of autumn have touched the forests with the glow of coming glory and the air is like an elixir. On Will's birthday, October 5, 1858, they were married. It was truly an auspicious occasion, for it was not only a love match, but both the families were well pleased. William took the express wagon and our two horses and made the journey overland in order to bring back the trunks and bridal outfit. Brother Joe was not at home upon this occasion, being still at Uncle William Utter's. Ida and I did our best to get everything in order for the arrival of the bride and groom. I remember how she and I went through the house,

how we laid the table and made everything as nice as our limitations would allow. We had the supper all ready to serve. Every five minutes we would look out to see if they were coming. The sun went down in a glory of brilliant clouds and twilight was gathering when I made a dash for the front door, and there I met my new sister, Julia. We were all so full of happiness as we took her bonnet.

I remember she had a traveling suit of small check made with a cape, which, as I recall, we designated as a "circular duster" and which was entirely in accordance with the fashion of that day. How interested we were in seeing her bridal things, for was she not our first own bride? I think she was married in white, but what was called her second day dress was a beautiful blue silk. In this gown, with her white bonnet and white kid gloves and the tiniest cloth gaiters on her little feet, she was as pretty as a picture. She brought us liberal pieces of the wedding cakes, which were kept in memory, talked of, and used as standards of excellence all our days together. Her mother was always generous with Julia, and gave her a fine supper with the Hunt relatives for guests. Cal Hunt Tilton dressed the bride and did a lot of the planning.

The next May after William and Julia were married, her mother's health began to fail more rapidly. She had not been well for some time previous, but it was not known until the autumn how serious was her condition, when her feet began to swell and other dropsical symptoms appeared. Her physical distress was great; as the swelling mounted she was finally unable to lie down, but sat up to breathe. It was all most sad for the family. Will had engaged to teach the school in Marion, and they left Green Tree to go to that place with anxious thought and sadness, for they knew Mother Morris must be in a very critical condition. The doctors of that time seemed to have no idea of any relief for such cases, nor did they give the family any encouragement that something might be done to make her more comfortable.

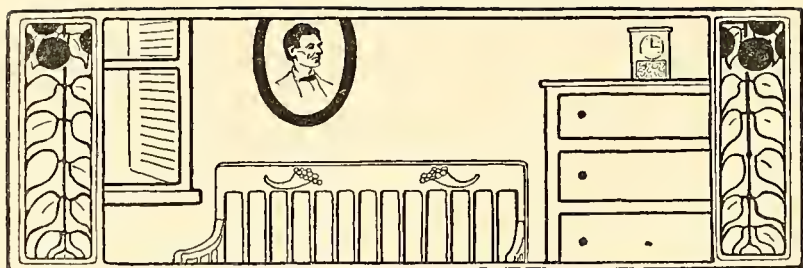
About this time a young girl came into the neighborhood, and hearing of the illness of Mrs. Morris, offered to undertake the nursing of her. She was a capable help during those day



when the invalid was slowly growing worse until it seemed at last that death must be near. About this time the girl, whose name was Sallie Sharp, was suddenly taken down with typhoid fever and grew rapidly worse. One Sunday an itinerant minister was speaking at the schoolhouse at Green Tree, and I went to hear him. I remember that Sallie was about the strongest and most active in the crowd. The very next Sunday, hearing that Mrs. Morris was not expected to live, I went down to their home. I found the yard full of neighbors and friends, and when I went into Sallie's room I was pained to find her dying.

Mrs. Morris lived two weeks after Sallie and suffered more than we shall ever know. Julia was called home by telegram. During the interval between Sallie's death and Mother Morris', I went down to Harrison on a visit home. Father and Sister Ida brought me back in the rockaway carriage. I was surprised to find Mrs. Morris still living. Her last days were full of pain and anxious thought for her two youngest, her little girls. She loved her children devotedly and felt her work on their behalf was not finished. She would call them about her dying bed and talk to them about their future; I think she did the night we arrived there. The next day she passed away. Father preached her funeral sermon; his text was: "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." The yard and house were full of neighbors. The interment took place at Lebanon. Thus the dear little girls, Alice and Clarinda, were left without a mother. Aunt 'Rusha Spinning was a boarder in the home, but she could not take a loving mother's place. Green Tree was not to know a real mother again in the Morris generations.





## CHAPTER XI

### CHANGES IN THE OLD HOME



HE honeymoon over, the thoughts of our bride and groom turned to the founding of their home. Our father decided to rent the farm to the young people, while he would take charge of the Harrison Church, some twenty miles west on the line between Ohio and Indiana, and plans were maturing to that effect. The dairy, which had been profitably followed, was pushed to one side as the cows had gone dry. The milk crocks were placed in the cellar to stay until spring and our "works shut down."

Our parents had to struggle to build this frame house, and in fact through all their lives it had been a long pull on an uphill road. After building the house, some years intervened before we could finish it. As often happened, it was our mother who had the head to plan and carry forward what she had planned to a victorious conclusion. It was the one great material desire of our lives to see our house painted and the shutters put on, which had for years been used as a ceiling for an unfinished room upstairs. One day a letter came from Xenia, Ohio, from a son of father's old friend Winans, asking him to take as a boarder his daughter, who was convalescing from a fever. He was an attorney at law and a man of means and could make it worth while to take the extra care the child

would need. It was agreed that mother was to handle the board money and spend it in improving the house.

On the appointed day Mr. and Mrs. Winans came, bringing their young daughter of perhaps ten years of age. Her hair was just coming in after her recovery from fever. To make the story shorter, the plan for getting money to repair our home was a success. Mother called one of our Carthage friends to paint the old weather-beaten house white and the shutters green, and hang them and lay new porch floors. Next a mason came and finished lathing and plastering the entire unfinished part. I can scarcely tell you what it meant to us. For years we had seen our home grow more dingy looking without, and we needed all the room there was within, which yet required much to be done to make it comfortable and complete. When all was at last finished we young people felt more self-respecting, as we then looked about as well housed as our neighbors. I love to think of what a joy came to us each at the renewing of the dear old home.

Years before father had placed shade trees about the house — a mulberry tree bearing large, sweet, white mulberries and later a couple of ailanthus trees bought from the nurseryman added their shade. The common and more expressive name for these trees was theirs in their East Indian *habitat* — Tree of Heaven. They had leaves something like the walnut tree, pointed and growing on long twigs. When in bloom the odor was far from heavenly, but the umbrageous canopy was delightful and refreshing on a hot afternoon of summer. Then there was a coffee nut tree, with pods and beans which latter we sometimes roasted, but they did not seem to us in the least to resemble coffee as to the taste.

To catch a glimpse of our dear home through the trees was to us a most charming sight. I remember well the day when father planted a wild grapevine some friend had brought him from the woods. They dug a hole in which to place this vine, and then a trench along the edge of the porch, placing grafts of the Isabella grape in the prostrate vine. These grafts grew well, and in after years climbed up to the eaves and clung to the banisters about the upper porch and made a bower of it.

Oh, the exquisite fragrance of that vine in the season of blossoming, and how heavy it was with luscious clusters of grapes in the time of fruitage! It was our delight.

Fair and lovely indeed our home seemed the summer after it was renewed. The fine shade trees nodded and waved their plummy branches over the white house; the vines wove in and out of the banisters, which glistened between the greenness, pearly white in the glow of sunset. The whole picture of home seemed a climax to our dear parents' toilsome lives. As we children were pretty well grown they decided to rent the farm to William for the present and go to live and work for the church in Harrison, for a time at least.

One morning before daylight we started for Cincinnati to get some clothing in view of our departure for Harrison. That morning comes back as real as if it had been yesterday. I remember I wanted some handsome neckwear, so as soon as we reached the city we got off on Fourth Street at one of the fine, big stores. I was looking at some beautifully embroidered collars when I found Elsie Van Zandt Tift there, whom I had not seen for some years. We were engaged in conversation when mother came into view. I was startled to see how distressed she looked and I made haste to learn the cause. She began by saying she had just heard bad news from Neighbor Van Zandt, who had followed us into the city, and who, passing our house about a half hour after we had left, had found it all in flames. The pale, drawn face of our mother—it comes back to me with a pang as I write! We left at once for home, not learning the amount of the loss until we reached a view of it. It was a great shock to us all, but in the spoiling of my youthful dreams it seemed nothing short of a tragedy. As we drove through the neighborhood we learned that no one was hurt, for which we were most thankful. When we entered on our own farm and looked up the road we saw Julia and Ida coming to meet us. We learned that almost everything was saved excepting the house. As it was so early in the morning when we left for the city, the others were still in bed when we started. William and Julia were sleeping in an upper room next to the shed kitchen. On hearing the snapping of the

burning roof they thought I was getting breakfast, but upon looking out on the shed kitchen they discovered the whole roof blazing and the flames driving toward the main building. The season had been very dry, and there was no water in either well or cistern.

Will sprang out of bed and awakened Ida, who hastened into her red calico dress, getting it on wrong side before in her haste and fright. She ran down the road crying, "Fire! Fire! Fire!" If there had been but three pails of water when Will discovered the fire, it could have been extinguished and the dear home saved; but as it was they had to see it burn down like tinder. Will tried to tear the shed kitchen away from the main part of the house, but it was too late and he could not. The good neighbors hastened to his help, and all the furniture was saved excepting what was in the kitchen. Will's powerful voice had sent the alarm of fire from one end of the neighborhood to the other, and they came as rapidly as possible and ripped off the shutters and dragged out the furniture; but it was too late to save the house.

As we drove up to the place where our home once stood the scene was one of ruin and desolation. The chimney and cellar walls were standing, but the four walls of home had vanished; our goods were piled under the dear old walnut tree. I still recall the calm dignity of our brave mother as she at once went to work to collect the scattered goods and pack them in our carriage house near by, while our dear father sat down at the foot of the walnut tree and wept out his heart-broken grief. "The labors of a lifetime gone in an hour!" were the words I heard him repeat while we were all wondering what next. Father's lifelong friend, Uncle Jimmie McCash, came forward and offered us some rooms at his house.

As we were now homeless, William and Julia thought of the Green Tree, and so the next day they got in our market wagon and took me with them off to Warren County to await further developments. I was twenty years of age then and felt my spirit strong for the battles of life. I was determined to do something. It was a lovely autumn day, and as we journeyed along our minds were full of our loss and we

wondered how it would all come out. I recalled the events of the early morning of the previous day. I had been in the shed kitchen and had seen neither fire nor smoke. The stove, it is true, was the old one of our grandfather, one of the very first brought out from Cincinnati. It was what was called a step stove; beneath the top step was an oven. It may have been faulty some way, but we were not aware of it, and it was the general belief that the fire was incendiary. That old John Wolf stove upon which I learned to spell "Cincinnati" perished, and as a monument of our grandfather's progressive spirit it was no more. He had an expression I recall here for the thought that the present is better than the past; it was "Better now than it was last," and he tried to make this come true in spite of his peculiar obstacles.

The old cupboard made for our parents' first cabin also perished in the kitchen, together with mother's first table and her pans and iron ware. Brother Will's gun burned in there and gave a last salute as it was overcome in the conflagration. The cellar was a sad ruin; the forty milk crocks were melted together in rows on the cellar floor, with some butter mother had packed for winter use. Outside the lovely trees and vines were destroyed — the "trees of heaven," the coffee nut tree, the grapevine bower were withered and killed. I seemed to see what Sister Ida had described to me — the flames creeping around between the clean white banisters of the upper porch — and I did not wonder that she fled from the cruel sight. Our hearts were indeed musing and sad as we drove from the funeral pyre of our childhood home.

The cause of the fire we could not divine, although it was the opinion of the neighbors that "Nigger Bob" had done the deed. It is true that he had never ceased to be desperately angry that father had sent him from the place with his drunken riotings and wife-beatings. The neighbors had seen him on the road after dark the night before, and he seems to have disappeared after that. It looks rather possible and plausible that they may have both camped in our hay mow the night before, and when we started for the city they began their work of destruction. I know of no better place to tell of Bob and



Sophy than right here. During the last days before the war, father found a black man who had once been a slave and was then a wood-chopper, and so, as he wanted some clearing done, through pity for the race he hired Bob to do it. He and Sophy then moved into grandfather's house, where he had free rent, while he chopped cordwood for the city market.

For a time all went well, and then we found that both negroes were addicted to drink. They had some relatives near, who would often congregate at Bob's while the host would find whisky in a grogshop back in the woods. I once met Bob with a bag over his shoulder containing two jugs, for which he apologized by telling me he was on his way to that shop in the woods to get vinegar. The "vinegar" made a great riot that night. We were awakened about two o'clock in the morning by the most blood-curdling cries of "Murder! Murder! Murder!" which finally sank to a weak voice and a half choke, but still the word was "Murder!" After enduring this night of terror, Sophy had Bob arrested and swore her life was in danger. The case was brought to court and Bob, believing he had a firm friend in "Massa Will'um," had our brother subpoenaed as a witness on his side. Greatly to Bob's surprise Will witnessed against him, testifying that he was a bad negro, so Bob was taken to jail. No language can describe the rage of that poor, depraved soul. After he had been in jail a week or so he bribed the jailer to let him out for the sum of two dollars and a half.

This happened in the fall, when father and Irish Mick were gathering apples in our south orchard. I heard a strangely excited voice down there, which I instantly recognized as Bob's. We all ran out to learn the trouble, and found that Bob was out of jail and was vowing vengeance on all the Watkins tribe at the top of his voice. He told father how he would burn him out, poison his horses, and so on in a list of revengeful acts. He had a club in his hands, outstretched in a threatening manner. Mick was frightened out of his wits, which Bob knew; while father kept on at his work of picking up apples and keeping his face to the foe all the time. Mick was soon up the ladder and in a place of safety, leaving father



to the mercy of the half-drunken wretch. The boys were over to College Hill and the neighbors too far away to call, but father kept as quiet as he could and told Bob to begone. At last he did go back to the old house; and father waited until he had quieted down and then he told the two that they must go, that their presence on the place could be no longer tolerated. We had stood them for almost two years, as I remember.

It was Bob's boast that he had been the servant of one of the most prominent lawyers in Cincinnati, and when under the influence of grog he would come up to our house to deliver an oration and show himself off as some distinguished man dressed in the cast-off garments of the great. As he walked the floor he would wrap his threadbare coat about his swaying form and declare that it had belonged to Lawyer Ball. Then he would point to his trousers and old shoes and add "— and Chase and Skinner in the ba'gain!" Often to make his speech longer and more euphonious he would descend into ancient history and declare that "De chil'un ob Israel, dey wandered fo'ty yeahs in the wilderness and — *what did dey make at it?*" With this as a climax he subsided for a moment. Sophy said Bob could quote scripture like a preacher, "an' he was n't no betteh dan he oughteh t' be!"

During the time Bob chopped wood for father the country was much stirred by the great comet of '61 and '62, and the two negroes had a plan to outdo the universe. At the foot of a long hill and on Mill Creek there was a yellow mill by the dam, and Bob and Sophy thought out a scheme and came to tell us of it. They were going down to the "yalleh mill," and when the comet struck our little world and set it on fire they planned to jump in the pond, and as the flames swept down they were going to duck under and hold their "bref" until the fire passed over; and then, as Bob said, "We'll come out and presess the lan'!" I once asked Bob why he did not go to church and be a better man. He confided his reason as follows: "Oh, I cain't go. Yuh know, Missie, a heap said, a heap 'qui'd; little said, little 'qui'd!"

It was that same fall our dear home was burned and real changes began. The comet was blamed by the superstitious

for a great many things. I remember the evening in October when I first saw it. We had been looking out admiring the bright stars which spangled the sky and watching first one and then another flash out, when suddenly, while looking toward the north, we saw a new one with a luminous vapor about it. We called mother and she thought it might be a comet, so we talked much of our discovery and looked for it each evening. We noted the fact that it grew and changed its place in the heavens until it seemed to race after the sun and appeared in all its brightness as soon as twilight left the sky.

The papers of the time had a lot to say about the magnitude of this wonderful comet. Some conjectured that it might strike our planet and destroy it; others saw famine or predicted war. The spirit of the times certainly justified the latter prediction. The internal ferment of the day was great. Political phases grew more and more to be the topic of conversation everywhere. The North was divided upon the subject of slavery — some thought we should let it alone to take its course, while others noted the crowding desire for more slave territory. The "Solid South" called for a dissolution of the Union, and some were eager to fight it out; and I remember that one so-called "fire-eater" declared that "only blood to the bridle bits" would satisfy the South. All those drastic words and fierce disputes were leading our country on to the darkest day in her history, and thoughtful men were in terrible suspense.

To return to our desolated farm — father and mother and Ida prepared to move to Harrison, while we three, William, Julia and I, went to Green Tree. Brother Joe was then working for Cousin William Utter; we were indeed scattered from our nest. While I was at Green Tree Julia and I were invited to her Uncle Spencer Hunt's to spend the night. Here opened up an experience of no ordinary interest. The Hunt family was related to the Morrisises through Aunt 'Rusha Hunt, daughter of Benjamin Morris, who married Spencer Hunt. We were introduced to her at Green Tree on our former visit. In the olden time she had lived in her own ample home, a mile south of Red Lion and not far from Green Tree. They

were prosperous farmers; their home was spacious and their hospitality princely. Uncle John Hunt, brother of Spencer Hunt, was a man of wealth, and he and Aunt Abbie stayed a good share of their time with Uncle Spencer and Aunt 'Rusha. There was a room in their home called "Aunt Abbie's room." Uncle John had in early days been a shipper on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers between Cincinnati and New Orleans, and had made a success of it.

As they had no children they took the place of benefactor to the Hunt boys, who were quite superior in ability. Uncle John sent them to college somewhere in the East. After they had finished school, being a railroad man he secured good positions for them, and altogether the generosity of this childless pair caused them to be much admired and much quoted in the neighborhood where they lived and among their relatives. They had brought up a niece, Cal (Carrie) Hunt, given her a boarding school finish, and acting in the capacity of guardians had carefully watched her interests and saved her money for her. As Uncle John and Aunt Abbie made their home with Uncle Spencer, it was Aunt 'Rusha who mothered Cal and her brother Howard. Their parents had died of consumption when they were little children. Uncle Spencer Hunt was more to Howard than most fathers are to sons, and he and Uncle John educated him and started him out well in life.

As Cal and Howard grew up they were far above the average, although Cal had not been trained to self-control. Aunt 'Rusha always apologized for her by saying that as a child Cal was delicate; that her young mother had died when she was a babe, and that they scarcely expected the girl to grow to maturity. It is true that the young mother had consumption when Cal was born; but the forecast of her indulgent relatives was not correct, for she lived to be almost 70, long after the guardians who had so zealously saved her property had passed from earth, and at last she died in poverty. Howard lived to mature years, only to return to Uncle Spencer Hunt's to die of consumption in the high noon of his life, but in sincere Christian hope.

I still recall with pleasure the evening Julia and I spent at

the hospitable fireside of Uncle Spencer and Aunt 'Rusha. They had at that time a son, Morris, who had been in Kansas in the times leading up to the War of the Rebellion. He had contracted consumption, and at that time was far gone with the disease. He had early advantages of education given him by his Uncle John and was a cultured young man. A sweet girl was his friend; her name was Mary Bowen. She and her sister Alice were beautiful girls. Alice was a true beauty; I used to feast my eyes on her loveliness. I thought at the time I first met her, and I still think her, the most beautiful woman I ever saw. Her sister Mary had beauty, but not in so great a degree. They had cultured ways and had been carefully educated. Morris loved Mary and they were engaged, so the story went.

As the autumn was rapidly passing Morris asked to have his bed moved downstairs, so all hands were busy arranging the parlor for his sickroom. An orphan niece of the family, Miss Abbie Jenkins, a woman of about thirty, was an excellent assistant in all departments of the home. She took care of Morris in his long illness. It was on Friday, as I remember, that the invalid was brought downstairs to the parlor. He showed signs of failing, and on Sunday evening when we young people had started to Red Lion, where the Methodists had a large church, we were called back when we had gone but a few yards by a messenger calling to tell us that Morris had gone. He had been sitting by the open fire and, feeling that he would like to lie down on his bed, walked up and stretched out his poor skeleton form and instantly expired, before the family could assemble. A neighbor had just called; it was all so sad, this coming on the threshold of life and then, before anyone was aware, to be snatched away.

The funeral was a mournful one. The sweet girls of whom I have written were dispatched for and came; their presence made a sad impression on us all, as Mary was devotion itself to her lover and his memory. From that time she began to go into a decline, and the next summer, when she and her sister came again, the ravages of consumption were manifest; by the time the winds of the next autumn shook the golden

leaves of the maples down, she too found her rest. So even in my youth the friends I so loved and admired were called away early. Of Alice I have no story to tell — she just passed on, I know not where nor how.

These deaths cast a sad shadow on the Hunt family. They prayed and read the Bible, and finally came to take up the burdens of life, trusting in the promises of Jesus. Sometime in March Cal Hunt was married. The wedding was meant to be a quiet affair, but as Silas Tiltan, the bridegroom, had been a boy among the boys and was not yet twenty-one, the youth of Red Lion thought it would not do to let this wedding pass without a charivari; so before the wedding supper was served we heard horns blowing, and could see by the moonlight that there were a lot of mounted men and boys on foot with tin pans and drums and other unmusical instruments. Oh, how it did hurt Uncle Spencer to think the young men had no more respect for his family than to be guilty of such an unkind act!

The Hunts were told that I would like to help them with the fall sewing, and as they seemed pleased to have me I at once began to assist them with this large work. They were making men's clothes — coats, vests and trousers. Abbie Jenkins did the cutting and basting, while I would sew and Aunt 'Rusha would press them: thus we made business move. I think now as I look back on that period of my life that this experience gave me one of the best educations I ever received. I felt responsibility and a desire to be helpful, and I had, above all, Abbie Jenkins as a teacher. She was a choice spirit; I never saw her other than good-natured and kind. Indeed, the whole family was noble, and the women were religious. The men were not Methodists; they could not read the Bible that way.

There seems a place here to write of the lovely and unusual, life of Miss Abbie Jenkins. When I knew her and the Hunts she was thirty-two that autumn, and yesterday (November 8, 1912,) I heard that she had died, having had to the end of her long life of eighty-five years the full possession of her extraordinary powers of mind and heart. The sketch of her life which is in the Franklin (Ohio) *Chronicle*



is called "‘Aunt’ Abbie Jenkins; a Memory of Our Yesterdays." It shows how she was loved, honored and admired to the end of her years. In this sketch it speaks of the wedding of Uncle John and Aunt Abbie, whose maiden name was Abigail Rathbone. They were married at the home of Miss Abbie's father, and the one we called "Aunt Abbie" was of old Rhode Island colonial stock. At the time of her marriage to Uncle John Hunt he was a member of the state legislature from Warren County and was spoken of as the Hon. John Hunt. It also tells of their going to live in Uncle Spencer's home in Red Lion. I am tempted to quote from the article of this day about those other days. This is a reference to Miss Abbie's school days: "Abbie Jenkins had her first schooling, at the age of two years, at the home of Misses Mary and Phœbe Brooks, just north of the present station of the Scioto Valley Traction Company. The children at this school were of such tender years that little cribs were provided for them to take their naps in. She afterward attended the best private schools in town, finishing at the Academic school of Mr. Hazeltine." Her father's home was the meeting place of kindred spirits who were fond of debates on political, economic and all public questions as well as religious ones. She grew up in one of the finest types of the homes of long ago. Sometimes the material prosperity and educational facilities of to-day tempt us to forget that there were culture and good breeding of a high type a hundred years ago, and that young hearts turned toward them then as now.

In the article to which I have referred it tells of Miss Abbie's going to live with Uncle John and Aunt Abbie at Uncle Spencer Hunt's, and that she found herself in "delightful, even ideal surroundings" and soon learned that the large farm home of Uncle Spencer was "the favorite meeting place of all the young people of the neighborhood." I, who lived in that home for more than a year, know that this was all true. Miss Abbie began to devote her time for study at Uncle Spencer's to French and art, and kept up both all her life. Especially did she delight in the study of French, reading with ease its literature.



I remember she once sketched a picture of the road from Uncle Spencer's up to the village of Red Lion, and had the little Johns girl and me pose for her. We walked down the road with baskets in our hands to add a touch of life to the scene, and so we too became a part of Miss Abbie's crayon work. She studied art in Cincinnati about the time I knew her, and later established a studio. We read yesterday that she left many portraits and landscapes in oil; I wonder if anywhere among the works she left is a crayon of that road up grade to Red Lion bordered with dog fennel, and if still there remain to view the figures of a young woman and a little girl of fifty years ago. I like to think of this cultured friend of other days, and it is sweet to know that her lovely life shone on undimmed for eighty-five years, and that always she attracted young people to her just as she did me more than half a century ago.

Uncle John was a man of pronounced views on both politics and religion, but especially politics, as at that time the question of American slavery was agitating the country to an alarming degree. It was the central thought, and was discussed on all occasions and at all times. Wherever you met a company of men at a tavern or sale, traveling by land or water, that was the one absorbing question: "What do you think of the peculiar institution of American slavery?" Oftentimes this question was discussed from a religious standpoint, many claiming for it divine sanction. While I was at Uncle Spencer Hunt's came that day, December 2, 1859, when John Brown suffered death for his principles. I remember on the day appointed for his death Uncle John sat with watch in hand and noted the time of his execution, telling us how many minutes were left John Brown to live. When he closed his watch we knew that it was all over, the one of many impending tragedies. The day was dark, as though the very sun had refused to shine on the day John Brown suffered for love of justice to the bondsman.

At stated periods Uncle Spencer would bring out his large express and take the women folks over to Franklin to do the family shopping. In the evening they would return with a

load of dry goods — bolts of muslin and dress goods of all sorts, besides household supplies of every kind. After shipping a car load of pork to Cincinnati, Uncle Spencer and one or two of the boys would go down in the big lumber wagon to buy things by the quantity. There would be hogsheads of brown sugar, "sugar house molasses"—drippings from brown sugar, rice by the sack, raisins by the box; what household stores, and such a flurry and excitement as greeted the return of these prosperous people from market! George Hunt, Uncle Spencer's eldest son, was married and lived near him, and he shared in the marketing. The things on their return were divided. I remember that year that three barrels of sugar were consumed in Uncle Spencer Hunt's house; brown sugar was used for cooking and loaf sugar for tea.

Oh, what lots of business with our needles it was to make up all the muslin they brought home! Every moment seemed precious, and we were all happy in doing things — filling trunks and cupboards with garments thought necessary to keep up this large family, so like one of patriarchal days! The home of Uncle Spencer was like a storehouse.

After the execution of John Brown the condition of our country grew more and more turbulent. "War is inevitable!" cried the orators of the South. The campaign of 1860 was one the like of which has not been known since, nor was it known before. Lincoln was the hero of the hour — "Honest Abe" they called him. The history of his backwoods life and his very occupation shed a lustrous halo of their own about the plain name. Orators took advantage of all this enthusiasm and these details of Lincoln's experience, while politicians dramatized his life — his rails, his maul and gluts, or wooden wedges, were brought forward, and among the hills of Ohio these were most efficient in producing great interest and enthusiasm. I went from Hunt's to Red Lion to see one of the torch-light processions. There was a crowd there, and I should think a hundred young men marched to fife and drum, with tin quart cans containing kerosene and fitted with wicks to be used as lamps. These cans were placed on long poles held in the right hand and resting on the shoulder. While

marching the procession turned at proper angles to describe a rail fence, called a "worm fence," such as "the Rail-Splitter," Lincoln, had made in his youth. The air was full of the tramp of young men who had but a short time before vowed allegiance to the Union, and who sang with the lusty voices of youth, "We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more!" It is not the purpose of these sketches to write the history of all that dark and cloudy period when the fate of our country hung in the balance, nor to depict the anxiety everywhere, North and South, that filled our land. I can only leave behind a little impression of those wild and exciting days of the presidential campaign of 1860. It was and is unique in the history of our country, and we who lived then can never be as we were before; the anxieties of the times burned themselves into our souls.

I recall how active Tom Corwin was in this campaign; his home was in Lebanon, the county seat of Warren County. I went down to Lebanon to hear him speak. He was an abolitionist, as was our father. I saw the parade and the fireworks, but as Cal Hunt Tilton's baby got colic, I regretfully departed with his mother just before the speech, so I neither saw nor heard the man who was a leader at this important crisis. Thus it was that I missed my one opportunity to hear a great orator in the greatest presidential campaign our country has known, all on account of little Howard's untimely colic.

As I sit here after a long stretch of years and read the sequel of the life stories of the friends of our youth, with the preacher I say, "All is vanity!" So many mistakes made in early life follow one all the days. I think of dear Uncle John Hunt, and how free and generous he was with the Hunt boys; and if they had been simple, good, industrious farmers, how much better it would have been. The education he gave them they wasted. Money, like knowledge, is a great power either for good or evil. When I went to Uncle Spencer's they were looking for Uncle John and Aunt Abbie home from a visit to Logansport, Indiana, as I remember. As I stated in the beginning of the recital, they had their own room at Uncle Spencer's; it was an upper corner room, fronting toward the

Red Lion, with a fine view of the straight road leading north to the old tavern which stood about a mile away. From that cozy corner they could see the neighbors coming and going to the village. I well remember Uncle John's arrival home from a visit to Indiana, announcing the fact that Aunt Abbie would soon occupy her own room; so everyone was expectant, and at table her coming was spoken of as a happily anticipated event, so we prepared to receive her. When Uncle John and Uncle Spencer went over to Franklin to meet her we prepared a fine dinner, made a fire in her room, and were on the lookout for her arrival with the two old gentlemen.

Soon she came in, all bundled up in hood and furs; a round, smooth face was hers, well illuminated by a fine large pair of soft brown eyes. Her figure was portly; she weighed two hundred pounds. With the rest I greeted her warmly, whereupon she asked me if she "filled the bill." I told her that she did. She dressed in the style of the day; a brown "front" was combed smoothly over a high and broad forehead, and a black head-dress of silk lace crowned her. She had an easy and offhand way of sincere love and kindness.

Thus began a happy acquaintance lasting over a long stretch of years. Uncle John was not a Christian by profession; neither he nor Uncle Spencer could read in their Bibles the religion of feeling their sins forgiven, nor could they believe in the doctrine of "faith alone." Thus it came about that the two sisters-in-law, who were so devout, dear Aunt 'Rusha and Aunt Abbie, read their Bibles daily as they sat in their large armchairs. I noticed that they read in course and turned down a leaf as fast as it was read, so I looked one day to find that every leaf in their well-worn Bibles had been turned down. At the Red Lion meeting house they were both great "powers" at the "anxious seat," both in prayer and exhortation. Aunt 'Rusha was a good singer, and when she was well enthused would throw off her wraps and move down the aisle shouting and singing:

"I'm going home to die no more, to die no more —"

clapping her hands and interspersing shouts. Dear, earnest

soul, she did go home long before Aunt Abbie. She took cold, which developed into pneumonia almost before they realized her to be in a critical condition. I love her memory. Aunt Abbie, too, was a charming woman, both in appearance and in social life. She was of a romantic nature. In her youth she had become enamored of a young man, whom she loved and idealized. It was a cruel shock when she found out that he was a drunkard, and it cost her an almost broken heart to break the strong tie of mutual love that bound them; but her heroic nature, combined with a well-educated conscience, told her that the only thing to do under the circumstances was to separate herself from so weak a lover.

Aunt Abbie was fond of poetry and had a line or stanza for almost every occasion. She had written the story of her young life, in which she told of the tragedy of her broken engagement. I never heard her read this story, as its retelling gave her pain to the last day of her life. Uncle John was fine looking, distinguished in appearance; we used to think he resembled the pictures of the old Presidents, Andrew Jackson particularly, though Uncle John was an ardent Republican. He stood "six feet three," and always dressed in blue broadcloth; his fine suits were sometimes not in the best condition, but as the boys said, "It don't make any difference what he wears; he's rich!"

He was always interested in politics, from his youth, when he was a member of the legislature of his state, to those years of the greatest presidential campaign, when he sat in his arm-chair and read aloud most eloquently the stirring speeches of the time. I recall a story of his youth when he was courting Aunt Abbie. She was planning a grand wedding with lovely bridal clothes, when one day her young statesman arrived in high disdain of "fuss and feather" and insisted on Aunt Abbie's marrying him at once and returning to Columbus with him. Away flew her dreams of a fine wedding, with guests and pretty clothes; she obediently stood up in a calico dress and was married to her insistent lover by the 'Squire.

Uncle John had written home to Uncle Spencer and Aunt 'Rusha a description of his Indiana girl purporting to be au-



thentic. It pictured her as being "big as a washtub" and with a neck "blue as a plucked goose's." It scarcely prepared them for the very handsome and noble-looking bride, full of vivacity and a match for Uncle John in all his best points. Her size was a subject for his joking more and more as they grew older. When she and Aunt 'Rusha started off for church, leaving their delinquent spouses at home, Uncle John would remark to Uncle Spencer as the two ample backs started down the road in the rockaway: "By George, see those springs come down!" This was the strongest expletive I ever heard the old brothers use — "By George!"

It was indeed a sad mistake that Uncle John gave the Hunt boys so much of his money that at last dear Aunt Abbie was left with very little. When his nephews became entangled in debts and misfortune followed them, he tried to help them to escape disgrace. Thus it was that when Aunt Abbie was a widow, she and her niece, Abbie Jenkins, lived together; and their lives were not without care, though their home was always a social center in Franklin. In Abbie Jenkins' obituary it says of that home: "Anyone who knew Aunt Abbie Hunt and Abbie Jenkins can appreciate the force and charm of the attraction that drew all that came within the circle of its influence."

Aunt Abbie outlived Uncle John by many years and was about ninety when she died. The days grew very sad for her at the end of her years, for she had a fall and broke her hip, and suffered physically as well as in her heart. Death separated her from many of her early friends. It abides with me still, the influence of that visit at Uncle Spencer Hunt's. In the home of our childhood every thinking hour of our lives was burdened with difficulties because of lack of money. We girls wanted various things not to be obtained, and there was much of self-denial in our family. I know it was best for me, at least; but it was a hard schooling. I realized it lifted much care from the parents. Aunt 'Rusha was never obliged to work or to economize, though she was all her long life a busy woman, especially with her needle.

During those ante-bellum days many friends were driven



apart, but kindred spirits were also drawn together. New Antioch in Clinton County was the center of a large Christian church where an August meeting was held, and people congregated there by the hundreds. They came from adjoining counties and stayed about two weeks, and those last weeks in August were a great religious and social festival for the whole country. Here our father often preached, and it is a satisfaction to know that in the memory of a few his mellow voice rings on. Not long ago I had a letter from a friend of my youth who recalled how his smooth eloquence rolled under the forest trees and among the rustling leaves there at the August meetings in New Antioch. She added that she had heard just this summer (1912) a man in Ohio, speaking of preachers, say that he had never heard a man who could fill a church with his voice like B. U. Watkins — a voice so full of power and tender love.

At these August meetings spoke Harrison Jones, a man who could move people to laughter and tears in a moment's space. Among other speakers was John Easter of Highland County. He and father were drawn together by two strong cords; they were both devoted members of the Christian Church and both strong abolitionists as well. Between them grew up a sincere friendship. Brother Easter admired father for his profound scholarship and manly defense of principles which he regarded as fundamental and which were then being strongly combated by those opposed. Father saw in Brother Easter a manly man who, although not scholarly, was still of fine natural ability and good judgment. When he found that father was at liberty for a time, he proposed that our parents move from Harrison over into Highland County. There father was to preach for the church near John Easter's and tutor his sons.

When this proposition was made I was at the Hunts' in Warren County, and father wrote me of his good fortune, telling me of Mr. Easter's great farm, seven hundred acres of rich bottom land on Rocky Fork, and of work he would like — teaching and preaching. I was twenty-one years of age, and I began to draw pictures of living among rich land-owners.

I pictured a lovely country dotted with fine homes among the trees; I saw fine horses and a large family carriage such as Brother Reader of Cincinnati drove. Sister Reader dressed elegantly in silk and satin. She used to sweep down the aisle of our church at Carthage, while a handsome changeable silk rippled its full folds about her daintily shod feet; on her head was a beautiful bonnet and long lace veil; she carried a wonderful cloth cloak, and as she sweetly smiled on us plain country folk we thought her altogether lovely. Her gracious ways were to me a sweet memory. She had invited me to their home in the suburbs of Cincinnati, and I had gone to the flower show in the city with her; and the thought of these wealthy friends symbolized refinement and beauty. I fancied the rich land-owners of Highland County would be something like Mr. and Mrs. Reader.

I made my first visit there with great expectations. I bought my ticket to Hillsboro and was met by father in the rockaway carriage. One of his students came in on another train at about the same time — R. L. Howe; and so we all started for the Easter farm together. It was the famous "court day" of the olden times; many people were in town and I watched the crowd with interest. The courthouse was surrounded by a board fence, and many teams and wagons of sorts were hitched about that fence. Among the boys and men assembled there I saw what to me was a strange sight — a man with a wild-looking fur coat on, my first view of a 'coon-skin coat. I asked Robert Howe what it all meant, and he told me the man in the fur coat was John Easter's son-in-law from Indiana. By the time I had met the family of my father's friend, I had another vision of the country rich man.

The fine macadam road out to Rocky Fork was full of interest, for it was all new. Clearings on every hand were interspersed with cabins and in many places good, comfortable homes, but no show of elegance or wealth. However, we were a happy band of young people who drove out that day, and were prepared to have a good time and adjust ourselves to whatever awaited us.

Our parents and Sister Ida were living in a part of Allen

Easter's house, a good, almost new frame house. He was a fine man, and his wife was a woman of sweet nature, a good housekeeper, and the mother of a dear little boy. Our associations were always amicable. We had all of the upstairs and a large room downstairs for a kitchen and dining room. Besides the four unmarried Easter boys, father had as pupils R. L. Howe and Emerson Vandervort. All these young men were earnest and promising. Emerson Vandervort lived but a brief life, and, long ago in his prime, Robert Howe passed away; but he left sons who have been an honor to the name. His sisters were among the most devoted friends of my young womanhood.

Brother John Easter was a fervent admirer of the preachers of the Christian Church in his day, and he displayed this in the naming of his sons. The boys father taught were John Burnett, Alexander Campbell, Benjamin Watkins and Hall, named for father's friend, Dr. Alexander Hall. The Easter boys were called simply John, Aleck or 'Eck, Ben, and Hall. There was but one daughter in this family; she was married and was at home at that time — Mrs. Angeline Geeslin. She and her husband had lately returned from their home in the West, and there on the old home farm their first child was born, while our folks lived on Rocky Fork. This new family had its following, too, and the little baby in whom we were interested became the national secretary of the Christian Woman's Board of Missions, the organization that years afterward, was to call my only daughter to India. Mrs. Jennie Geeslin Harlan (Mrs. M. E. Harlan) is an example of the old saying "blood will tell," and she serves the Church in a worldwide sense.

Highland County in those days was full of broken woodland, with many hills, hollows, and caverns. I recall the fact that when driving through the country, as the wagons passed along, for quite a distance the ground seemed to indicate the existence of a cavern; as they were of frequent occurrence, no one ever thought to investigate these underground rooms. They were doubtless the hiding place of many a wild animal — opossum, raccoon, skunk and rabbit. Strange tales were

told of a wily beast who might be called "the great unknown," who for years, it was said, had roamed the wild woodland, appearing on nights of pale moonlight, much to the horror of young boys. He was described as old and gray, probably of the wildcat family, who came out for but a moment and disappeared, a terror to all the dogs in the country. Many encounters had the dogs with this animal, known among the Easter boys as "the Spook."

One day in spring, after sugar-making was over and it was yet too early to take the boys down to the bottom lands to open work, it was announced that they were going out on a hunt in which they hoped to capture this ancient terror, "the Spook." All hands were out with clubs; they were to start out from Blinks. Much excitement was shown by the younger tribe, while the older were quite as enthusiastic. There were the four Easter boys and some of the neighboring youth. Parental authority on the farm of John Easter forbade the boys carrying firearms on any occasion; he wisely thought it unsafe for a lot of excited boys to go abroad with a gun. So with trusty old dog Painter and a lot of good, strong clubs they sallied forth to capture the Spook. They sent Painter out and closed in for a round-up, but in spite of shouting and pounding Spook kept out of sight, and to this day even the oldest inhabitant has never solved the mystery of that apparition.

Highland County was in those days a fine farming country which had been settled mostly by poor white people who had left the barren pine knobs of "Virginnie" for this better country. They were of the plodding kind, who seemed content with log house and tobacco patch. They appeared to have what they liked — unlimited time to move slowly and smoke. I had not been there long when Sister Ida and I went to spy out the land. I remember one long, low cabin with a clap-board roof held in place by heavy weight-poles; we called there and found a kindly and primitive people. The grass was worn off all around the house; no flowers or vines grew there and it was quite barren of beauty. The Easters in the midst of such surroundings had little in common with their

neighbors, and lived quite a retired life within their own family, going over to Clinton County for other companionship.

Mr. and Mrs. Easter were money-makers; everything that made for getting on in the world by the strictest economy was practiced by them. Their home was a large frame house which occupied a high ridge on the second bench of bottom land and overlooked the rich valley of Rocky Fork. One day in spring I stood on the top of a lofty hill near Blinko and looked over the great farm. Oh, but it was a sight to see! Mr. Easter and all his sons, besides the hired help, were out with horses, wagons, plows and harrows, while sacks of grain were heaped ready to be sown. As I looked down upon the slouch hats of the men I could not see their faces, so I was reminded of a great plantation scene. A better figure would be to describe it as a patriarchal picture, for John Easter stood at the head of his family and directed it as one of the fathers of old; and I never saw sons who showed greater loyalty and admiration for a father than did the Easter boys.

The country itself was a scene not to be forgotten. It was new and picturesque; a long line of blue hills lay in the distance, called Sunfish Hills. They were a rare background for the nearer scenes. The little river, Rocky Fork, found its way through precipitous banks which were a wild mass of rocks of every shape, all covered with hemlock and arbor vitæ or twined with vines and draped with moss and flowers. There were caves along the banks of Rocky Fork which were of sufficient size to attract many visitors. The scenery about the caverns was of remarkable beauty; Nature's rockeries strewn with ferns and rare wild blossoms were everywhere about the openings. There were cañons, too, with clear, running water finding its way in little rivulets to Rocky Fork. Hundreds of birds sang in the tops of the tall evergreen trees, their melody echoing from rock to rock, and in the deep, secluded forest these were the only sounds we heard save the ripple and splash of waters. I shall never forget a picnic we had there one time amid those scenes of wild beauty.

I had not been in Highland County with my parents



very long when Mr. Isaac Morris asked me to come back to his sadly bereft home at Green Tree to help them for a time. The story I am going to relate occurred about a year after the death of our sister Julia's mother, and as it was so clear a repetition of history in the Morris family I will write of it. I have already related that Saturday afternoon on the Green Tree Farm was a half-holiday, and at that time the horses were in harness and the new buggy and the old rockaway carriage that belonged to the family were out. Usually Grandfather Morris or Mr. Isaac Morris used the old carriage, while John or Bert took the new high-topped buggy; but in those days the boys used it only if they got it first, for it was noticeable that the shining buggy acquired a habit of standing in front of the Widow Walters' house on Saturday afternoons, and the fact began to be much talked over around the Green Tree corners. The summer passed and the autumn had begun when Mr. Isaac Morris made a confidante of Aunt 'Rusha Spinning, who had lived in the family so many years that she remembered well the shock when she witnessed the sudden return of Benjamin Morris with a new wife, which upset the home of Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Morris. Now she had to hear that Mr. Isaac Morris would soon bring home a new housekeeper for that old home.

I remember yet the sad, grieved look she had that day, for she foresaw that much would change, and for her it would be the loss of what had long been her home. Mr. Morris had enjoined secrecy until a certain time, when he would expect her to prepare the family for the advent of his new partner. True, the families had been neighbors, but it is also true that they did not look with favor upon the union. It developed that the next Sunday would be the wedding day, and he would bring his wife over to meet the family and later she would move in and assume her duties as wife and housekeeper. Pale and sad, dear old Aunt 'Rusha told us what we might expect on Sunday afternoon. She also wondered if the father remembered his father's second marriage; but if he did no one knew it, for Isaac Morris was a silent man and kept his thoughts to himself.



That Sunday afternoon came and brought the newly wed to Green Tree, and the children came in to meet the new mother; the boys, Bert and John, were well-behaved but rather stiff and cold; she kissed the little girls, Alice and Clarinda, and seemed to want to interest them, so all passed off quietly. I doubt not that to Aunt 'Rusha, who took in the situation, it meant already the loss of home, and that it was only a question of a short time when she must find another refuge. In this she was not mistaken, for soon she went to live for the rest of her life in Xenia, Ohio, with a niece, Mrs. Johns.

The next week the new Mrs. Morris moved her effects to unite her interests with those of the Green Tree landlord. She came with a determined air, and before a week had passed wagons from Lebanon drove into the yard with long ladders and paint pails and brushes, and then the great renovation began. The house had stood for years with the same paint and paper. Margaret Morris was cleanly and had her house in order, but clung to old ways; now was to begin a new era, and things were to be changed. This well-to-do farmer had ready money and the new wife wanted to let the good neighbors know that she knew how to improve existing conditions, so the whole house was soon resounding to the music of the scrapers of the workmen as they scraped the old whitewashed ceilings, which were also washed, as well as the parlor walls. Sandpaper helped off with the old green and blue paint; the great hall was papered and the stairs carpeted; new tables, bedsteads and spring beds were brought in, and an entire renovation took place. Aunt 'Rusha and Grandfather Benjamin Morris sat helplessly by and looked their wonder, though they said nothing. They could but remember the economy they had always practiced, but no words were spoken. Thus it was that the old home of the Morrises changed; but I must record that it was not beyond endurance, and things went on with apparent smoothness. Leah Walters was a strong, large-boned woman, capable of great endurance. She made fine bread with barley yeast from malt she obtained from the brewery.

I returned from Warren to Highland County again after

Mr. Morris' marriage. During the late summer our friends in New Antioch had found a fine teacher, A. M. Weston, to conduct a select school where advanced studies were to be taught, and when I returned in the fall, school had begun and Sister Ida was a pupil there. As Uncle William Utter lived near New Antioch, Joseph also took studies there. Thus it was that on my return home I found our parents alone in one of Mr. Easter's houses, a little old home among the evergreens, a picturesque spot near a small mill pond whose pent-up waters made a pretty cascade as they foamed and tumbled over the boulders and broken rocks that had at some time been hurled down from the ledges above.

This little stream that dashed off to join Rocky Fork was called Blinko, and where we lived was known as Blinko Shades. Our yard ran down to the edge of the mill pond, which made a picture-lake. A rustic bridge spanned the stream, which went wandering down the valley where huge slabs and boulders told their own story of a remote period of upheaval. I shall never forget the little islands the rocks had made in the stream, where a few cedars or evergreens would cling, or those moss-covered slabs, flat as a table, where was spread such embroidery of delicate fern and airy wild flower as one seldom sees save in such shady, well-watered spaces of Nature's most retired gardens. Lovely carpets of mountain moss starred with pink blossoms, dainty columbine, and such a show of woodland draperies as one rarely sees in a lifetime were there to delight our eyes.

Father would occasionally write beautiful verses, and I recall that one evening at twilight he went forth, as the evening star was shining, to dedicate some lines to the stream. He came back from his walk by its banks, went to his desk, and wrote a poem entitled "Blinko Shades." It began:

Dear Blinko Shades, no classic muse  
Has gilded o'er thy simple name,  
But I have felt thy twilight dews  
And lingered by thy sylvan stream.

How I regret that only this fragment of what was a beautiful poem remains in my memory. I think it was published in

John Boggs' paper, *The Christian Luminary*. Mr. Boggs was a great friend of our father, he who had such a large social nature and loved his friends so warmly. I remember this Christian editor visited us while we lived in the Blinko cottage and I helped my mother prepare the good dinner, and I recall just what we spread upon our table more than fifty years ago. During the summer our people had gathered wild blackberries and elderberries in neglected fields, and mother had a lot of these wild fruits canned. There were fine apples from the orchard on Blinko. Then we had squashes and sweet potatoes and fried chicken. I remember yet with a grateful thrill how Brother Boggs complimented the elderberry pie I had made and mother's bread. He seemed to enjoy the simple feast, and what a fine visit we all had as we sat in the evening about the open fire. "Tears do unbidden start" at the memory of such sweet simplicity. A few have yet the art of entertaining simply, graciously, and spontaneously, and within some home circles is yet a "feast of reason and a flow of soul."

After my return home mother wanted to go to Antioch, so we took our horse Kit and started to drive. We had a long, tedious journey, taking us about all day. A meeting was in progress at the church, which gave us a good opportunity to meet our old friends. We had, without planning, made our visit on that never-to-be-forgotten first Tuesday in November, 1860. Every hour that day was making history, and Abraham Lincoln was elected to the presidency of the United States; the last time we could say "united" as we did before or as we have since those four sad and bitter years of fraternal strife. As Antioch was an abolition center, election day passed off quietly.

Before I tell of our farewell to Blinko Shades I must record with what enthusiasm the Easter boys entered into school life and what commendable progress they made. It was amusing to hear them call each other Greek nicknames, as "Hippos" and "Nepos." They organized a literary society and named it "Crescendo." Mr. Easter had built a mill on Blinko, and near it was a large cabin with a big fireplace, and of this deserted building the boys took possession for their society.

John Burnett Easter had been to school at Bethany, West Virginia, and had learned some college ways, so they arranged programs. They told us girls a plan of theirs one day; they were to have a grand exhibition in the "Hall" (the log house) and Alexander Easter was going to invite Miss Ship out from Hillsboro. An old Scotch Highlander was to dispense sweet music from his bagpipes and Allen Easter and lady were to entertain at a supper. Oh, but it was all great fun! Everyone had such a good time. Miss Ship was a town girl, young, handsome, and refined, but she entered into the spirit of the occasion and enjoyed the novelty of it all.

The bagpipes outdid all the performances of the evening; the tuning up nearly convulsed Miss Ship and us girls. We were to march over to Mr. Allen Easter's for the "banquet," and it was worthy of the name. Mrs. Allen had plenty of roast chicken and good things. Going over from the Hall we found the road very muddy, so we had to "march" over "stake and rider" fences, through blackberry patches, and across the damp meadow. The old minstrel marched ahead, playing on his bagpipes, his tall, slender form swaying to the music. His long gray hair shone from under his Scotch "bonnet"—what a picture he was of a "minstrel, infirm and old!" I could but think of that line of Scott's as I watched him. In spite of the obstacles it was a gay march, and the banquet was well worth it.

Long ago those youthful orators and debaters grew into middle age, and we heard years after our paths separated that Brother Easter had sold his great farm on Rocky Fork and was preparing to move to Kansas. He told his boys that he felt his life was ebbing fast, and should he not live it was his wish that his remains might be taken to their new home. I told the narrator I knew his request would be granted even should it be necessary for his loyal sons to bear his casket on their shoulders to that land.

Our father was known everywhere as an advocate of peace. He thought that to be consistent he could not ally himself with any human government by voting, as he would thereby obligate himself, he thought, to defend his vote if necessary by

taking up arms in war. Brother Easter could not see the question in that way, and so it was agreed that they would debate the question in the Society Hall. Brother Easter brought forward very convincing arguments, and came as near proving his points as anyone with whom father had ever discussed: so said our father himself.

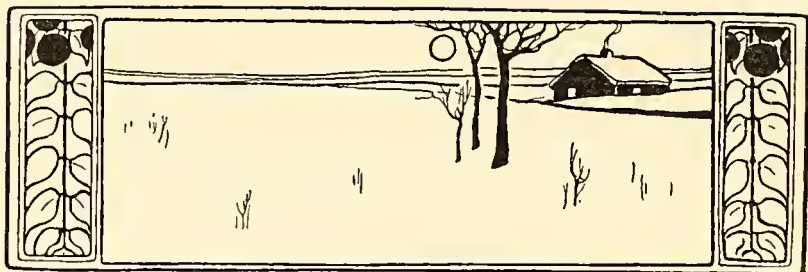
A new student for the ministry had been brought from Minnesota back to Ohio by Emerson Vandervort that fall. He was bright, good looking, and ambitious, and went to his books with a positive hunger to know. My parents welcomed him cordially; his name was Alvah Frost. Many times in after years he has spoken of the greeting of mother and father and how it warmed his wistful heart. He helped us prepare to leave Blinko Shades. It had been decided that the farm needed the attention of our parents, as the tenant had not proven satisfactory. Our last days on the banks of Blinko were spent in packing, with all its attendant cares; I remember the burdened look of our dear father and mother. It was decided that Mr. Frost should take the horse and rockaway carriage and proceed to our old home in Hamilton County, while we should go by train from Hillsboro to Cincinnati, where we were to be met by an old neighbor and taken out to Walnut Tree Farm. At the hotel in Hillsboro we invited Miss Ship to dine with us, and bade that lovely girl good-by, never to meet her again. This was in April, 1861; the spring was late and the wind quite cold, and oh, how dismantled and cheerless everything about our old home looked as we drove up in front of the place! Father had only restored the back part of the house, expecting to put on a front later; the tenant had already moved, and we entered to find the rooms bare and empty. We had bought bread and a lot of groceries in the city, but we did not have them with us; they were on the road, and how different it all seemed from many another home-coming in the days that were never to return. As soon as our neighbors heard of our arrival the nearest ones, James Cummings and family, came in to invite us over to their house, and this invitation we gladly accepted.

Almost the first thing father did was to hunt up a cow,



and gradually we adapted ourselves to the changed conditions. The next Sunday we went to church where father had preached for twenty-five years, the church of our nativity. War had been declared, and you could feel its thrill as soon as you entered the church. Old friends with anxious faces began to meet us and tell us of their fears. I remember how father with many tears admonished his brethren to be sober and "watch unto prayer," to remember the Kingdom of Peace was the one to which they had vowed loyalty. A "Peace Democrat" gave us some secession sentiments, but our father added some good counsel, the best he knew; for one could but feel the awful calamity that had already begun its fiery march to despoil our fair land. That was for me the last Sunday in the church of my childhood, as the next Sunday was to be my wedding day.





## CHAPTER XII

### HOME BUILDING IN MINNESOTA



THOSE were busy days before my wedding, for the time at home was short. Mother had made me twenty-five yards of rag carpet, together with new quilts, and my clothes were ready before we returned to the farm. Father gave us a hundred dollars for a start, and mother and I went to the city to buy my housekeeping outfit. I remember the bright spring morning, the clear, cool air, the unusual sights and sounds. The booming of cannon from the garrison at Newport could be distinctly heard as it arose from the valley to the lofty hills walling in Cincinnati, announcing the disturbance of our country throughout its vast stretches. It was but a short time after that, April 15, 1861, when President Lincoln made the call for seventy-five thousand volunteers and that April day more than fifty years ago I expect to remember through my remaining years. I saw the very spirit of war the day we went in to buy my wedding dishes. Ten thousand soldiers were parading and drilling in the narrow streets, making travel almost impossible.

I saw the Highlanders in their bonnets and plaids, with their short stockings showing the bars of the tartan of their clan. They were in full uniform, which disclosed their bare knees in contrast with their plaid stockings. How their bagpipes echoed down the streets! The Guthrie Grays and

Zouaves were rushing to places of enlistment; officers mounted on finely caparisoned horses passed through the streets with waving plumes and martial music. On every side we felt the thrill of war in the very air of our familiar city. I saw mothers leaning on the arms of stalwart sons as they spoke their last farewells, and among the hills the soldier boys each sought the girl who was the dearest and best, just to reiterate the vows spoken in brighter and happier days. I remember yet how tense some of their young faces looked as they stood talking most earnestly by the wayside. The excitement everywhere was great.

Brother Joseph was driving the team of new horses father had just bought, and it was well that the harness was also new and strong and the wagon a stout army one, for when we got into the tumult of that day they were quite fractious. The sudden call of "Father Abraham" had brought a rush of volunteers to the city. While waiting for suitable camps to be selected the soldiers were drilling in the narrow streets, which were ordinarily crowded thoroughfares. The booming of the cannon over at the barracks, the noise of drums and bagpipes, the bugle calls, and the great crowd, all united to distract our new team. Brother Joe held on and father and Alvah were ready to help as we drove into that surging mass of omnibuses, hacks, coaches, and horse-cars. On the business streets traffic became so congested as to demand the presence of mounted police, who with clubs waving wildly in the air would shout themselves hoarse calling for a break. The flash of uniforms and arms, all so new and bright, is with me still. How soon were those speckless accoutrements to be stained and soiled on distant battlefields, although at the time it was expected that in the space of three months peace would come again!

The excitement in Cincinnati was the more intense because of the proximity of the Kentucky line, and that state, in the language of the times, was still "on the fence." All the natural defenses there were seemed to be on the side of our southern neighbor. We could scarcely find standing room in the larger dry-goods stores, but we could hear the merchants

in various places say that in case of the secession of Kentucky they would be ruined. We heard others talking of the possibility of cannon being placed over on the lofty hills of the Kentucky side, from which point of vantage Cincinnati could easily be wiped out. Mother and I kept our nerve and made our purchases. We went into a china store and selected my dishes. She bought for me a full set of what was then new ware and called stone china; it was pure white. There were a dozen each of dinner, breakfast and pie plates, as we called bread and butter plates, besides cups and saucers, sauce dishes, meat platters, deep dishes, tureens, and all complete. The tea cups were better than the ordinary, because they had handles.

Tinware, knives and forks, a set of plated spoons, and best of all a shining britannia teapot were added to my outfit. At the last mother took up the teapot, really handsome in design and like polished silver, and asked me if I would like to have that. I at once replied that I should be delighted, and so she ordered it packed. How pleased I was; and though the polish is gone and it shows wear, I cherish it yet, and recall that time of youth when the hands of my dear mother held up its pretty, silvered surface to catch the light, while outside the soldiers of the Union were drilling in the streets. Little did we dream what would be the fate of my wedding dishes selected so carefully that day in '61. We also bought for my outfit muslin, table cloths, towels, and sixteen rolls of cotton batting, the latter for comforters.

When all our purchases were finished we found they amounted to about fifty dollars, and oh, my young relatives, I felt rich that day, and satisfied! The merchant had securely packed my dishes in hay in a barrel and they and our other purchases were loaded into the army wagon. It was just all Brother Joe could do to keep the horses in the road; he held the lines with all his might until we left behind the turmoil of the city. It was evening when we drove through the front gate into the orchard, where we were glad to unload. We found that the dish packing had been a success and nothing was broken.

After that trip to Cincinnati there was a busy time getting

ready for the wedding; what a rushing to and fro there was! We washed up all the new dishes and got to work making up the muslin and comforters. We were making the latter for the cold land of the North, Minnesota, for there I was to go with my bridegroom. I remember that we put seven rolls of batting (seven pounds) in one of those comforters; it looked to me when it was finished something like a feather bed, but it proved a wise article in my outfit.

May 5, 1861, I was married to Alvah P. Frost. He and Emerson Vandervort had previously agreed to perform the wedding ceremony for each other, should such an event occur to either; so it was that Emerson and his brother Dick were our guests at this time. The wedding day came on Sunday, and early in the morning it began to shower, the warm spring rain continuing to fall all day. Father and Emerson went to Mount Pleasant to church; the rest of us remained at home, and when the church-goers returned the table was spread with the best linen and my new dishes, the chickens were roasted and the cakes on the table; they were three in number — gold, silver, and fruit cake—and were pronounced good; with fruit and preserves the wedding dinner was all we desired. Emerson said the words briefly; we promised to stand by each other in sickness and health till death should part us, and so we have continued through over fifty years, in accord with this solemn promise. My wedding dress was of silk with a full skirt and flowing sleeves, having puffed undersleeves of white lace; it was thought to be very fine for those times.

Two weeks later I left the old home with my bridegroom. Brother Joe rented the farm from father, and he and Sister Ida were there with our parents, while William was teaching in Galion, Ohio. Mr. Frost and I were to go to Minnesota. Father and Joe took us to Cincinnati, and there I parted with the last of my dear home folks and began the new life apart from them. We went as far as La Crosse, Wisconsin, by rail, via Indianapolis and Chicago. As there were then no railroads in Minnesota, we must go on from La Crosse by water. At La Crosse we met crowds of soldiers coming and going to Fort Snelling, situated on the Minnesota River.

The topic everywhere was war. There was much conjecture as to its speedy settlement. They were enlisting one hundred days' men, little realizing to what extent the conflict was to be carried. On reaching the river to take our steamboat, we found it booming from the melting snow. At the landing the beautiful steamboat *War Eagle* was in readiness for us. It was evening and a big crowd was waiting to go on board. I found among the throng fine ladies whose husbands were going out to take up claims far from civilization as they had always known it. I wondered how their gold bracelets and fine cloth dresses made by skillful dressmakers would look in some claim shanty. One was out for the first time without her baby's nurse; but she was sensible enough to say that she knew it would mean the sacrifice of many things to start as a poor man's wife.

I spent all the time on the guards that the cold winds would permit. How I admired the high bluffs which stood out like sentinels rearing their lofty heads directly from the Mississippi, and were doubtless used by many an Indian brave as a vantage point of lookout. We saw the rock called Maiden's Leap and heard its story — the tale of the maiden Winona and her two lovers, one favored by the father and one by the daughter, and of her leap to death rather than marry the chief she could not love. This rock faded to give place to Sugar Loaf, a bold bluff whose apex is indeed shaped like a sugar loaf, at that time a complete oval. I was to look upon it daily years afterward, though then time and change had touched it with no uncertain finger. It has also been mutilated in these days by commercial greed, as it was discovered that the limestone composing it was good for burning in kilns to make lime with which to build up the city of Winona. In order to save the noble landmark the city bought the bluff, but not until it was somewhat mutilated; and the only ones who can understand the beauty of the original Sugar Loaf are those who saw it as we did, fifty years ago. I did not dream a beautiful summer home would ever arise there near its foot, which should shelter my Brother Joseph's one child, but so it was to be.

When we approached the expanse of Lake Pippin we





Alvah P. Frost



Julia Watkins Frost





found it was snowing, but this soon passed off. Our boat made good time, while we watched the long line of waves and foam made by the great sidewheels. We stopped along at every important town. The tables on board were loaded with good things to eat, and it was indeed a delightful wedding trip. The *War Eagle* seemed to wind in and out among the many low islands which really spoiled the broad bed of the river. They seemed to be floating on the surface of the water and logs and driftwood were piled high on their banks.

We floated on past the dark tamarack groves whose roots were tangled in the swamps, and even the somber beauty of those trees could not make us forget the millions of mosquitoes breeding in the waters of those swamps, tormenting man and beast and inoculating with malaria; however, of this latter fact we were then in blissful ignorance. Along the banks we caught glimpses of those leaders in the procession of bloom in our northland — the downy Easter blossoms (Pasque flower), pale lavender in color and starting up from the snow to shed some resurrection hope after the long northern winter, lifting up lovely cups to hold the sunshine even before the green of the grass appears. They were the harbinger of the train, I soon learned: violet and anemone, wild cherry and lupins, and on through the loveliness of summertime till the glorious autumn, when aster and goldenrod shone on the prairies and great gardens of wild sunflowers tossed their heads and invited the honey bees to revel.

The whistle on our steamboat certainly justified its name, *War Eagle*, for it was a wild scream. When near St. Paul a brass band came on board, and as we approached our destination it began to play some fine airs, which were very heartening. When we entered port a cannon was fired, which seemed to be the signal for all the coachmen to come from the heights and in a long procession drive down the steep dug way, making a most picturesque scene. I had never seen the like of these coaches before, nor will our descendants see their counterpart used again. As I looked upon them for the first time I could but think of Cinderella's coach. The body of the coach was red, while the long boot at the back for carrying luggage was

black. Soon we were walking down the gangplank, and our feet touched the soil of a new world — the great Northwest.

The coaches, we learned, were those of the Burbank line, and did the freighting from St. Paul to the far North in winter, as well as carrying passengers from Prairie du Chien to the farthest forts. With our trunks in the boot, we were now comfortably rolling about on the heavy, elliptical springs and on our way to Anoka. The vast amount of freighting done by that company, even fifty years ago, would make an interesting page in history. They owned the entire route along the upper Mississippi, although when that river was open and entirely free from ice there was not so much need of the stage coach; but in winter they were a necessity. With their four horses, their fine fur robes, and fur-coated drivers they made a picture of luxury which lent a charm to winter voyaging over the sparkling snow. I remember to have met one of these luxurious turnouts on our way along the river bank. Sometimes in the cold winters of the North they used the river as a highway. Stories are told of airholes, of horses falling through into the water, and of their rescue by means of halters thrown over their heads to raise them and keep them from sinking till they could be helped out alive. Many a tragic tale is told of airholes in the ice of the Mississippi.

All along the trail, every few miles, was a fine hostelry prepared to entertain travelers or, as an old settler is quoted as saying, "to detain travelers in a hostile manner." With boats in summer and stage coaches in winter the track was kept open all the year around. Thus the frontier forts were fed by Burbank freight wagons up as far north as Fort Abercrombie. We met them every hour in the day as they toiled through the deep sand along the river road; we saw on this wedding trip of ours the primitive methods of traffic in the great state of Minnesota.

On Saturday we reached Anoka and stayed all night with an old friend and teacher of Mr. Frost — Mrs. Hattie Waterhouse. My husband's people were living in St. Francis, and he walked the fifteen miles over there to see them, returning with a horse and buggy for me. As we drove along I found

much that was new and interesting. I had never seen prairie country before; it had been burned over and the blades of green grass were springing from the black surface, interspersed with wild flowers, noticeably the little woolly Easter blossoms which in coming springtimes I often saw showing their delicate color through a blanket of snow. Gophers and little striped squirrels were frisking about; the jack oaks were coming into bud. I could but think of the warm spring day we left Cincinnati — the little apples forming on the orchard trees and the loaded bushes of lilac and snowball. It was a pleasure, though, to see the spring coming a second time that year. At St. Francis we found but a store and a post office besides lumber and flour mills. My husband's parents were infirm, especially the father, he being afflicted with rheumatism. They received me with expressions of parental kindness. My two younger sisters-in-law, Elmina and Orlinda, were at home, and the brother next older than Alvah was the stay of the family, Levi Frost.

We went to housekeeping in a little deserted claim shanty which was at least clean and cozy, a good place to camp out during the warm months. Early in the summer the defeat of the Union forces at Bull Run made things look quite dark. About midsummer, on a Sunday, we were taking dinner with one of our church friends when word came that a man from Ohio had arrived in St. Francis. We made haste to see who the Ohio man could be, and as we waded along through the sand I saw, over the tops of the brush, a tall silk hat. I knew at once that it was Brother William. What joy! I was glad we had a bed for him in our little home. How we did visit!

It was sandy about St. Francis, and the soil was thin and crops uncertain; so hearing through the Vandervorts of a better place on the west side of the Mississippi in Stearns County, we determined to move there. It was about sixty miles distant from St. Francis, and we drove over. A neighbor, Hugh Wiley, whom Mr. Frost first knew in Ohio, lent us a little white pony and a buggy, and one bright autumn morning we three started out with our lunch basket packed, ready for new scenes and experiences.

The great, wide Mississippi divided the lands once owned by the Chippewa and Sioux Indians. The east side, the St. Francis side, belonged to the former, a quiet tribe of Indians whom we did not fear, while on the west side of the river roved the savage Sioux. In a treaty they were permitted to own a reservation on the Minnesota River not far from its confluence with the Mississippi, a most desirable strip of land. As they were being paid for their lands by the government, they were better off than were the poor homesteaders. The only hesitancy I had about going was that I feared the treachery of the Indians.

The roads and hills we passed over were sandy and we had to move slowly. We stopped en route with our hospitable friends, who always made us welcome. We found the bill of fare the same everywhere — potatoes boiled in their “jackets,” a bowl of dried fruit sweetened with sorghum molasses, and happy were we if there was also fat pork and “grease gravy.” There was salt-rising bread or saleratus biscuit, with sometimes butter made from very sour cream and not good nor fresh; but we expected these things, and as they were what others lived upon every day we appreciated the kind and hospitable entertainment. The journey was made in two days. Brother William did some walking up the little hills. The road led along by the banks of the Mississippi River until we came to Clearwater. We traveled at least half a day over a level tract of land known as Long Prairie. It was mostly wild country, with here and there a claim shanty and with but few improvements. Looking to the west the outlines of the landscape revealed a long black line of deep forest.

On the afternoon of the second day we reached the crossing of the Mississippi at the small hamlet of Clearwater. There we found a raft and a man to operate the same. Ropes were stretched in such a way that the raft went by the force of the current, and it was a good and safe transport. We drove upon this frontier ferry, the pony was securely tied, and soon we were all safely landed on the west side of the river. As we proceeded we noticed the soil with interest; in places it was

a black loam, with a clay subsoil, and there were spots of prairie covered with tall hazel brush and small jack oaks. The sandy roads gave way to a good, solid, hard bed, and so we watched the diversity of country and the quality of soil with an idea as to its value as an agricultural country.

After a hard day's travel we found ourselves at the small town of Fairhaven, where Emerson Vandervort was conducting a revival meeting. Here we were welcomed by the good Ohio people who were our church friends, among them the Stanleys from Maine Prairie who came down to meet us and take us back with them to look at the country. We left the white pony to rest while we climbed up into Mr. Stanley's big wagon and viewed the country from a high spring seat. This eight-mile ride was something novel and interesting. Mr. Stanley talked of "claims" and "homesteads," improved farms, and other matters of interest to us. At last we saw the land of our desire, and found it to be a little spot well protected from the wind by grove and brush land. Two beautiful lakes of clear water, Pearl Lake on the west and Carnelian Lake on the east, spread out their pleasing prospect before us. We heard of bass, pike, pickerel, catfish and redhorse that abounded in Pearl Lake and furnished good eating for the homestead people.

In the marshy land adjacent to the lakes, villages of muskrats built up their little houses of grass among the high rushes. The Stanley boys were hunters and trappers and made money every season from the furs they sold; besides, they furnished wild meat in variety for their home table. Later, at the close of the war, Mr. Stanley used to take wild meat by the carload clear to Cincinnati, where bear, deer, prairie chickens, and pheasants were arranged in a stall in the market-house in a fine, attractive display. There Thomas Stanley stood in his long fur coat, his white hair showing beneath his fur cap, and long white whiskers giving him the look that always suggests St. Nicholas; and as he usually went to Ohio about Christmas time, it is no wonder the children called him Santa Claus. He made this annual trip until laws were passed forbidding game



to be shipped outside of Minnesota, and so it came to pass that Santa Claus disappeared from his booth in the market-house of Cincinnati.

We found many natural resources in our new home; the tamarack swamps gave firewood and palings for fences; the marsh lands yielded hay; the land was good. The breaking of the sod without further cultivation gave a good crop of potatoes, turnips, and white beans the first season. Mr. Stanley was an excellent host and took delight in showing off the new country. He took William and Alvah out to look at lands to suit them, which resulted in our renting a farm with a good two-story log house, a team, and farming implements. Brother William also rented a tract of land with a house upon it, which he called the "Shadow Place," as he said that upon examining the title he found it had but the shadow of one! This name finally degenerated into "The Shad." The place was then vacant, the man being in the army and his wife at home with her mother. As the place we had rented would not be vacant until spring, we all moved into the Shadow Place as soon as arrangements could be made.

Mr. Stanley did hauling between St. Cloud and St. Paul, and passed near St. Francis on his route up the river, so he agreed to bring our goods up for us. We had returned to pack up and have our goods at the crossroads about four miles from St. Francis, where Mr. Stanley could load them on without going out of his way. This plan of ours, however, was frustrated, and so Mr. Stanley drove clear to our door, where he found us ready to move and very thankful to him for being better than his bargain. We all started early in the morning. Our things were packed in two wagons; we had some chickens, a pig, a new stove, two bedsteads, and some chairs.

We had picked up a poor homeless boy who had lost his mother and his father had married again, so he had come out with his sister from near Boston to find a home in the new country. Amos was a live Yankee, who was efficient and as tough as a pine knot, inured to hardship, and needing a home, so it seemed wise to take him into our home; he was the forerunner of others who have shared our abode as one of the

family. I think he was ten years old when he came to us, and he went to a school taught by Mr. Frost. Our good friend Mr. Stanley had engaged this school near us for Alvah, and he was paid at the rate of a dollar a day.

The "Shadow" claim was but a short walk from the Stanleys, and they were ever our good neighbors; had it not been for them and the Hoyts I should have been most lonely that first winter in the far North. As it was, many a pleasant evening did we spend with those neighbors. If the snow was deep the men would take me on a handsled, bundled up in a heavy overcoat. It snowed almost every day that winter; the snow was estimated as four feet deep upon the level, and then how it drifted in the high winds! We had never seen the like before. It grew so cold that Amos thought we had better kill our chickens to save their lives! We did so, and they were well frozen after death; many people killed their chickens early in the winter and froze them up in a natural cold storage, which was almost any place not directly by the stove. I did not like this way very well.

Brother William bought a yoke of oxen from Mr. Stanley; one was named Buck and the other, a white ox which had belonged to a Sioux, still had its Indian name untranslated, "Wapoose." With this yoke of oxen and an old sled we made many a trip of four miles to the post office and over to "Aunt" Eliza Vandervort's on the south side of Lake Carnelian. At this home we spent some Sundays which would otherwise have been lonely, and many a long winter evening has been brightened by the neighborliness of the pioneers. Bear and deer were then quite plentiful, and I think the Stanleys always had fresh meat; if deer could not be found Joe and Dave would get a fine raccoon. Mrs. Stanley sent me the first meat of the latter which I had ever eaten; it was a fine delicacy. In Fairhaven, eight miles away, we had some Ohio friends — the Deans, Ables, and others — whom we sometimes visited. Brother William liked company and got around among our church folks; and he would sometimes speak for them on Sunday, which we all enjoyed. Our brother brought with him into the wilderness his great natural endowments, enriched by

education; and wherever he was, whether in the virgin forest working with his hands or by the fireside of some primitive dwelling, his master mind was there accompanied by a genial wit and a warm heart.

Long and cold as was the winter of 1862, it was not without incident; some things that seemed marvelous to us happened in the lonely cabin called the "Shadow." One day Mrs. Stanley came over to tell me the Indians were camped west of Pearl Lake, and that she was going to bake bread and take it to their camp to exchange for venison, and if I would like to join her in the bartering expedition she would be glad. Much as I had dreaded the annual coming in of the Sioux to rove over their old possessions, yet I decided to accompany my neighbor, and soon got to work on the biggest baking I had ever done. I worked at it all that day and into the night, and when I was through I had a washtub full of nice loaves. Mrs. Stanley took potatoes, rutabagas, and bread as her barter, and about noon one bright, cold day we started with our bobsleds well laden with our wares. Mrs. Stanley was in fine spirits, the horses were in good trim, and it was a merry load which set forth.

Though I have spoken of but Mrs. Stanley and myself in this expedition, we really were well accompanied by a body-guard consisting of our husbands and Brother William and Amos. With buffalo robes snugly tucked about us we sped over the snow, making due west for the bluffs. A turn in the road brought us in full sight of the Indian village. It was laid out in long, straight streets; the tepees were either of heavy canvas or skins. This was a very large encampment; when we were in sight and smell of it, the horses threw up their heads, showed the whites of their eyes, and gave loud snorts, so that Mr. Stanley had to pull hard on the lines. After a time they became more quiet, although they continued to stamp, toss their heads, and strain at the bits. Mrs. Stanley was the first one out; what a woman she was for those far-away days — an ideal wife for a frontier huntsman! She was of Irish descent, with pretty Irish blue eyes, a few freckles, regular features, and animation written all over her small, compact figure; she

knew how to make the best of frontier life and get happiness out of it.

While Mrs. Stanley bartered I went out to the village of tents and looked over the Indian tepees at closer range. The Indians had scraped off the deep snow and left the ground bare for a floor. Then from the near-by marsh they had brought long, dry grass to spread down over this floor of earth; and lastly, they had carpeted all with blankets and buffalo robes, leaving a space in the center, however, for a small fire. Here the squaws boiled pots of venison and bear meat or tried out tallow, which they used in case of an emergency for food, believing it to be especially strengthening. In one tepee I saw a squaw beading a pair of buckskin moccasins, while others were preparing venison for "jerking." They had great pots of meat over the fire, and strips hung from the apex of the tent to dry. These strips were cut very thin and were called "jerks"; they were unsalted and dried quickly, hanging as they did directly above the fire in the center of the tent. It seemed to me no meat could be sweeter than jerked venison.

It was not easy walking about through the snow, and I retired to the bobs to look after the load; how well I did it will appear a little later. As I sat there wrapped in fur and buffalo robes I watched with interest the busy scene about me. I thought of these North American nomads; every year about Christmas they came back to their old hunting grounds and made great slaughter of deer and bear and all manner of game; sometimes they killed as many as a hundred deer in a single day. That day, as the sun was sinking over the white landscape shaded with dark thickets of hazel brush, I saw the hunters come back, darting out of the brush in almost every direction. Their mode of procedure seemed to be as follows: When the deer is killed they first skin it and then cut it up, removing the tallow; then placing the hams, shoulders, and tallow in the hide, they sling the bundle across their shoulders and break for camp. On this day, as the hunters were returning thus laden, the young Indians gathered about and cheered and shouted till the hills resounded with terrible din. After a time

of this noise, out from a tepee came a tall, old Indian who mounted a stump and began a fierce jargon, which acted as an immediate quietus and a sudden stillness fell over the camp.

It was all like the enactment of some wonderful drama to me as I observed their customs from my vantage point; as the hunters came in they did not stoop to lay down their loads, but while still standing straight as an arrow, they simply let go their hold and dropped their burdens at their heels; instantly lifting the curtain of the tepee they disappeared within, to take off their outer garments and stretch themselves at full length before the fire, while the squaw took the meat, the hide, and the tallow and began her part of the work. While I was sitting there in the bobsled great flocks of children of all ages, from the little papoose to boys of twelve, all came around to look me over and chatter and laugh and box each other, much like boys and girls do among white people. I saw all their antics, but thought little of this display.

After a time, when Mrs. Stanley had disposed of the bread, she came back to the sled in a most happy mood, crying, "All sold out but the rutabagas!" at the same time lifting up the buffalo robe which had covered them — yes, *had*, for they were all gone excepting two. Great was our surprise and my chagrin, for while I had been watching the spectacular stage-play of those aboriginal youngsters they were helping themselves to the contents of the sled box covered by the robe. This seems to have been their manner: they kept their blankets thrown over their hands, which they placed on the sleigh box, and from the shadow of their blankets they slipped their hands under our robe and deftly stole our rutabagas, entirely unobserved by me who had been left to watch our belongings.

My tub of bread brought a tub of venison hams and shoulders, so we felt quite rich, and for many a day we had this good wild meat fried, roasted, and boiled, besides dried and jerked; this latter was good and sweet to whittle off when we were hungry. I must record that the lightness of my bread was not in its favor, for with many dubious head shakes was its weight compared with the solid meat to be given in exchange but Mrs. Stanley was a good bargainer, indeed exceedingly



quick and bright about everything, and as the Indians really wanted the bread and we the venison, in the end all were satisfied. People who were accustomed to seeing large bodies of Indians estimated that there were about five hundred in this camp. Before I leave this incident in our lives, I should like to add that we always found the Stanleys our friends; more obliging neighbors I never had. They, with nearly all the friends I knew fifty years ago, are gone, passed from this life.

It is well that during the long winter of '61 and '62 we had something to anticipate. First and greatest was the coming of the rest of our family from Ohio — father and mother, Brother Joe and Sister Ida and William's wife and Baby Rosamond. Next in interest were the preparations we made for sugar-making as soon as the sap should begin to run in the maple trees. In early times there was a belt of timber running from Rice to Meeker County which was fifty miles wide and perhaps three hundred miles long. It was a strip of primeval forest looked upon as a marvel, for it was surrounded by extensive treeless plains. Great oaks and poplar, ash, cottonwood, hackberry, and maple sprang from the prairie, and could be entered as you would a wood lot in Ohio. In talking with some friends at Fairhaven, William and Alvah learned that there was a deserted sugar camp in a neck of the Big Woods not far away, and that it might be worked for the season by entering and claiming it for another year. Mr. Frost's people had moved to Fairhaven, so his brother Levi joined them in opening the camp. They declared that they would accomplish their aim, even if they had to crawl over drifts to get to the sugar grove. We had been struggling with the cost of living in the new country, and had come to realize that as we could obtain but three pounds of sugar for a dollar we must either make the forest furnish us sweetening or do without. It seemed that things we had once placed in the list of necessities were now luxuries. Tea was two dollars a pound, coffee fifty and seventy-five cents; calico was twenty-five cents a yard and good bleached muslin eighty cents.

We tried various substitutes for food we had been accustomed to have in our pantries. For coffee we made our own



"cereal"—barley from the bin was parched for this; for apple pie we made a filling of soaked crackers and cream of tartar flavored with sorghum molasses and cinnamon. "Pie melon," of the citron variety, was also a popular substitute for apples. Sorghum molasses was an almost universal means of sweetening. We had but one dollar's worth of sugar that whole winter, and there was in the house a half-barrel of cranberries ready to make up into good things to eat but for lack of sugar.

As I look upon it now the opening of that camp appears a gigantic task. They had to go into the Big Woods and clear a place to build their cabin; then they hauled their slabs and lumber from the old mill in Fairhaven and erected a shelter so that one end was large enough to be filled by a bed of proper proportions for the three men. At the other end they made a stationary table by boring holes in the side wall, putting in pins and fastening boards on. Then they set up a little box stove by the door, where Alvah officiated as chief cook, and fried meat, boiled vegetables, and made coffee.

William had Buck and Wapoose along—how the very writing of the names recalls that characteristic of our older brother, the renaming or altering the name of every person or animal about the place. His children will recall this playful habit and the names he gave their mother and themselves. Wapoose he generally called "the Wapoosian." Our brother bought Wapoose and the brindle ox, Buck, for one hundred dollars which he had earned while teaching school in Ohio. In the winter William and Alvah went into the woods and cut poles to make a handsled upon which they could haul supplies out to camp over the top of the remarkably deep snow. Out in camp they made a "Yankee sled" for the oxen to pull and a stone boat to haul in the sap. I remember the morning they first started out for the camp, dragging their handsled. The drifts were from four to six feet deep, and they went over the crust of the snow until, as day advanced and the sun grew warmer, the crust became softened and they began to break through, and sure enough, they did have to drop prone and drag themselves and sled over the snow in places.

They managed to reach Fairhaven, and there they spread

their beds upon the floor of the house of a kind friend and spent the night. The next morning they went about four miles farther down into the woods south of Fairhaven. It was virgin wilderness, and the maple trees were fine. Down there in the woods they prepared for sugar-making; they gathered sumach from which to make their spiles and dug out troughs to catch the sap. For the latter they cut down some fine cottonwood, basswood, and popple trees and split them into blocks to make four hundred troughs. When these troughs were ready they distributed them along over from forty to fifty acres, placing them on end by the trees so they would keep clean until time to open camp. In the evenings they sat in their cabin and punched out the soft pith of the sumach sticks to make two spiles each for their four hundred trees. Levi Frost was a carpenter and handy with tools generally and he made an evaporating pan of sheet iron in which to boil down the sugar water; so that soon everything was in readiness, even to a barrel fixed on the stone sled, that sap from the more distant trees might be drawn into camp.

Though their camp was very primitive they had happy times there. Brother William took his books out with him, and my husband described with merriment a familiar scene in camp—William stretched at full length upon the floor by the little box stove, reading French, while Alvah stepped over his legs cooking supper. Their candlestick was a block with three nails driven in it to hold the candle in place, and often by its light would William read aloud from Dickens or Lamb—ah, to be with him anywhere was a liberal education. While all these preparations were going on in camp, I, at home, made beaten biscuits by the pailful and fried quantities of doughnuts to send out to them by Amos.

The work of the week seemed to reach its highest pitch on Saturday. Bread and pies and fried cakes and beaten biscuits, all must be in readiness. Then I had to get Amos off for Fairhaven just in time to meet the campers as they were leaving the town and give them a lift as they started upon the poorly broken road between Fairhaven and Maine Prairie. I recall a Saturday when there was a heavy snowstorm, and I

watched eagerly for a cessation; and sure enough, about three o'clock in the afternoon the storm ceased, but it was turning cold fast. I had Amos get out the steers and start, but as I looked out on the great drifts I asked the boy if he thought he could get through. He told me he would make the venture, so off he went with the steers and his empty sled.

I took my station at the window to watch results. I could see the steers were just wallowing in the snow, mounting a great drift and then going down out of sight. I could hear Amos' Yankee halloo to the oxen as he cracked his whip, "Wo-hoosh, Buck and Bright!" Sometimes it was only the whiplash, sometimes but the little round cap Amos wore, that I saw above the snowdrifts; but on the brave boy went until he found Brother Will and Alvah tramping home through the deep snow. Oh, what a proud return was that of Amos! He had certainly gained a victory over Winter's battlements.

At last the slow spring touched the north and the sap began to flow. Down in the grove they tapped the trees with a three-quarter-inch auger, and then the barrels of sugar water began to roll into camp. Sometimes, when there was a good run, they boiled down syrup until late at night. One barrel of sugar water made a gallon of syrup or eight pounds of sugar. It was a great and happy day for me when Amos went down and brought a part of the campers home with a large cake of maple sugar. Soon I had cranberries and blueberries cooking, nicely sweetened with that sugar. Many and many a Saturday night has come and gone since that one which brought my young husband to spend Sunday with me, but it is all so clear to me — how we worked till late getting plentiful supplies ready, for now there was sugar to add some variety to the eatables we prepared. He went back on Monday well stocked up. Alvah has written down their fare in camp; one item was pancakes and maple syrup, and another hot biscuits and maple syrup, and he adds, "Oh, didn't we fare sumptuously every day!"

Once during the sugar-making I was invited out to the camp, and Aunt Eliza Vandervort and her daughters, Jennie and Mary, went with me. We had a good time and an

opportunity to see how my men folks made sugar. Their troughs were all new and clean, and so the sugar was fair and clear. Indeed it was the lightest colored and finest grained sugar from any camp that season. They molded the sugar in milk pans. The whole process was of interest to us — the evaporating of the sap to syrup in the large evaporating pan, the boiling of the syrup down to sugar in the big iron kettle; the molding of the soft sugar in the milk pans, and at last the boxing of the cakes to take home. It was all our own, the true Watkins Way — “direct from the laboratory to the consumer!” We dined with the campers and ate all the warm maple sugar we could, which the initiated will know is not a great deal.

Spring was well at the door. The lakes were open when our boys left the camp and brought home their wealth of sugar, four hundred pounds in all; and the great cakes of fair and beautiful sugar were placed on the pantry shelves, one above another, until they were fairly bending beneath their load of sweetness. As soon as the weather permitted we were desirous of moving down near the Roberts place on Carnelian Lake, where lay the land we had rented for the summer. Alvah had done the fall plowing on this place in order to have it ready for early planting in the spring. I remember how deep was the snow about the house and garden, where it seemed almost impossible for even the spring sun to melt the drifts. One day Amos climbed up on the garden fence and jumped out into a snow bank up to his armpits, and that was in April. However, spring was only delaying, and it was yet to come and open the waterways over which our parents and brother and sister and William’s dear wife and baby were to travel to us.

The Indians were still about us — I remember, one day when “Aunt Eliza” and we were talking of Indians, she told us that a small band had been camping in the timber near our lake, and while we were thus engaged in conversation I looked out to see an Indian dressed in a blue suit with a blue cord for trimming. I learned later that this was a Christian Indian, by name Lorenzo Laurence. He came in to ask us if we had heard that this band had been stealing from the settlers. We told him we had not. He related something of his history to

us: he had been taken as a child from the Sioux nation to Marietta, Ohio, to be educated, and when he returned to his own people and saw his mother he was greatly shocked. We were much interested in this man. His band was allowed to remain in that vicinity to hunt and trap. During this time Lorenzo Laurence asked the church people for the hall where our meetings were held, as he desired to conduct a service for his Indian brethren. We went to it, and I noticed that but a small number were in attendance. Lorenzo conducted but a simple service, singing some of our hymns which had been translated into the Sioux language. I saw there an old chief with a very solemn countenance, who, the preacher informed me, was in his youth a cruel and bloody man, but now was a humble Christian. I remember one of the young braves carried himself like a warrior, with a high head, while his face was grotesquely painted, one eye being surrounded by green, the other by yellow. The whole audience was orderly and well behaved. Lorenzo Laurence told me his text was "The house of many mansions." Episcopalian as was the minister, he closed the meeting without form, simply saying "Pockachee!" when all made a bee line for the door. This is noteworthy, as Lorenzo Laurence was heard from during the Indian outbreak, when he headed a party of refugees at the risk of his own life and took them to the fort in safety. As we waited in bright expectancy for the rest of our family to come, we little thought they were arriving to share days of fear and flight.

They were to leave Walnut Tree Farm for their new home in that spring of 1862, and they were busily preparing for the great change from southern Ohio to the most northerly state in the Union. The farm which father had inherited from the energy and enterprise of his father, James Watkins, had to be sold, and all the business connected with removal from a home of more than one generation was to be settled. Father and Brother Joseph attended to all this, and the latter had then begun to show that business sense which afterward distinguished him.

Among the characteristics which had descended to our father from his ancestors was what may be called a love of ad-



venture. This inheritance has come down to each, perhaps, in different measure and developing in different ways, and to this day existing in love of new scenes and strange lands. However that may be, we know that they made their plans for emigration with spirit and animation. They decided to take almost all of their goods and chattels with them, as their journey was to be made by water and that simplified the matter of transit. They had three horses and as many wagons. One was a new army wagon with a white cover, a sort of evolution of our grandfather's white covered Jersey wagon. The other two vehicles were a one-horse phaeton and an express wagon. Only a generation before, oxen had been used in the removal of our grandparents from New Jersey to Ohio; but in this emigration only horses were taken. Our parents brought their tables, chairs, and bedsteads, and it meant a great deal of preparatory work to get everything packed and then hauled to Cincinnati and put on the boat; but at last the task was finished and they were ready to start.

By some chance a letter has come into my possession written by Brother Joe to Will, dated December 13, 1861, while the former was still in Ohio and William was in Minnesota without his family. The letter comes in aptly here, for it was concerning this very period. I will insert some excerpts:

DEAR BROTHER: I am again seated to write you a letter, but I hardly know where to commence. I took your wife and child to the Tree [Green Tree] and got back yesterday. By the way little "Todamon" as I call her (I have almost forgotten my Greek!) is a very fine child. She loves her Uncle Joe more than any of them. I suppose father told you of how matters stand at the present time. I consider it a *royal* way of getting away from the old place. . . . I feel very well satisfied with the prospect of things. I suppose he will have enough to buy as large a farm there and maybe larger. As for me, I will get there with \$40 or \$50 of my own, but as to what I will do with it, I have not come to a conclusion. I have thought some of investing in horseflesh to take out. Mr. R. Van Zandt has a fine yearling filly which he asks \$25 for, which I think is about \$15 too much. George Robinson last night brought a three-year-old colt belonging to his brother for me to pasture and feed this winter. He is poor and much abused, can be had for about \$40. Will make a fine horse about as large or larger than Lucy. There is a fellow



up at Green Tree who offered about \$75 for Lucy, which, by the way, is all she is worth. I am in no hurry about investing in horses, however. Would like to hear from you on the subject first. I will have between two and three hundred bushels of corn for which I expect to get at least 28 cents per bushel.

I haven't made up my mind much about Minnesota. I imagine that the surface of the land is not hilly but gently rolling, not in long hills and swales as in Illinois and Iowa but in more moundlike hills and "winding vales" diversified by distant patches of tamarack and underbrush. . . . I am not speculating in cranberries or wild rice culture nor even laying plans to be pursued when I get there. "The fact of the bill is," I don't know how to speculate on nothing nor lay a plan without a foundation. It is going to cost so much to get to Minnesota that I have resolved to like it if it don't come up to my expectations.

This old letter gives one just a glimpse of a young man who started with means little and plans vague who was to develop a great business in the Northwest and make his small capital "the fortune you read about."

Mother's old friends parted with her as friends part who do not expect to meet again in this world. They expected her children might return, and father being a traveler, they thought it very possible that they might look on his face again, but not upon mother's; and true indeed it was the last time. The names of those dear old Carthage friends linger with me still as unforgotten music in the chord of friendship — Dill, Ludlow, Southwell, Sheehan, were among the names often repeated in our new home. Brother William's wife and baby were to go on the boat with them and a young man, Will Hughes, the son of an old friend of father's. He was desirous of testing the climate of Minnesota for his health, and would make his home with our parents for the first summer.

Nothing of note occurred until they came to the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers at Cairo, Illinois. This place was reached about the time of the noted battle of Shiloh and they found great excitement prevailed. The dead and wounded were being brought in, and crowds of excited people filled the streets. Our people talked with the soldiers and Brother Joe was given a cannon ball from the battleground while he was in Cairo, which he brought with him to Minnesota.

Perhaps it may be of interest to state here that he lost this cannon ball down by the shore of Lake Pearl some time during his residence there, and many years afterward, when he and I went back to Maine Prairie to see to the removal of our mother's remains from the grave by the lake shore to Winona, he found his long-lost cannon ball.

After they left Cairo, while journeying on the Mississippi, Brother Joe was taken with sciatica, and the care of the horses fell upon our father, which was difficult for him on the boat because of his blindness. Had it not been for the assistance of Will Hughes this would have been still harder, as the horses were on the lower deck next to the side wheel, and father ran some risk, with his limited sight, in finding his way among the machinery. Brother Joe was taken with sciatica very suddenly in the night and suffered intensely; when he got out in the morning his face was so drawn and white that Ida did not at first recognize her brother, ravaged by pain as he was. Here our people were, taken by surprise without medicine or doctor. Mother was a practical nurse and got hot water and flat-irons and by the time they reached St. Paul, with the aid of a cane and a crutch our brother got on shore. It is recalled to me that father met Dr. William Hall on board, who gave Joe some medicine.

When they reached Lake Pippin all ice had disappeared and they entered St. Paul with hearts of thankfulness. Father was ever a man of strong faith, nightly committing all to the keeping of his Heavenly Father and each morning receiving the renewal of His mercies with gratitude. Through all our lives in our parents' home we children depended on their strong faith. At Carnelian Lake I was getting ready for the glad day when our loved parents and brother and sister and Will's wife and baby should be with us. Homesick as I was for Ohio, I felt that with these dear ones near us I might be satisfied to live almost anywhere.

I shall never forget the coming of the spring of 1862. Never before in my life had I seen so slow a dawning of the green. Our first wedding anniversary (May 5, 1862) was without the signs of springtime in Minnesota that we had always enjoyed

in our southern Ohio home. The first warm day I could get out after the deep drifts had to some extent melted, I ventured into the side yard, which in summer had been the clothes yard, and where some philanthropic predecessor of mine had left a clothesline in the shape of a wild grapevine! Upon this I was hanging up some of my heavier winter clothes, for the warm spring winds told me of the passing of winter, when I looked up to see a large black bird much like a crow, which I was told was a raven. It had a voice all its own, but being high above me I could not exactly interpret its call, though I hoped it was of the variety of that famous one of Edgar Allan Poe and that it was sounding the knell of winter, for that season at least, with a cry of "Nevermore!"

I remember yet the bright warm sunshine, the fleecy clouds which floated above instead of the dark, heavy snow clouds. It was such a joy to see again the face of the earth so long folded in her winding sheet. How the dear little squirrels and gophers frolicked about and rejoiced in their freedom! The gray and striped squirrels and some new varieties I had not seen added interest. These pleasant signs did indeed herald the passing of winter, as the next few days gave witness, for just about the day our people landed in St. Paul the wind and warm sun began to melt the ice on the lakes about Maine Prairie.

Along the margin of our lake the ice first melted to about a foot in extent. We went down to see the process, and found that the little fishes were glad to have the heavy ice moved so they could get fresh air, and here they gathered, making a complete belt around the shore where the water was free. Just hundreds and thousands of these little fish were sporting in the open water! As the ice loosened from the shore the strong wind began to play havoc with the large ice field, moving it from north to south, catching it and beating it against the shore with such violence as to pile it high on the beach. In a short time the beautiful little lake was free and its waters sparkled in the sunshine. Oh, how glad we were to see at last the winter going! We now waited eagerly to hear how it was with Lake Pippin, and word came to us that she, too, was



Julia M. Watkins and Baby Rose



William Watkins, aged 25



free, and we knew our loved ones were now on their way to join us.

We had moved down to the new place and I had papered the house with *The New York Independent*, which Brother William was taking that winter. It was a fine large paper, and its back numbers came in very satisfactorily to me in my renovating, for it looked clean and neat on the wall. We had one large room and two bedrooms off from it, so we could have some heat in all the rooms from the one fire; besides we had a large "lean-to" kitchen and a good well with an old-fashioned sweep. The land was smooth and a broad field stretched to the east and south, neighbors were in sight and the air of being at home increased. I had cleaned thoroughly and gotten everything in order as best I could for the ones who were soon to be with us. Fish had begun to run into the outlet of the lake, so there was no lack of fresh fish — pike and pickerel, bass, suckers, and other varieties, but the former two were our favorites. As all our folks were fond of fish, we knew we should have at least one delectable dish to set before the new arrivals. We were pretty certain, too, to have had venison from our friendly hunters, the Stanleys.

It was about the middle of May when we got word that they had landed in St. Paul, and then we kept busy that the time might fly to bring our reunion. I was glad that the grass had begun to show its spring color and that the groves of popple were sending out their delicate, pale green leaves. The plum trees filled the air with their own peculiar fragrance, not so sweet perhaps, as the cherry trees and the grapevines about the old home they had left behind them in Ohio, but we hoped they would enjoy the new country as they journeyed overland toward us.

It was Sunday, just after dinner, when we heard some one calling at the gate, and we all ran out to find father's carriage with mother and Julia and Baby Rosamond and Brother Joe; the latter was well wrapped up in blankets and looked pale and thin. This was the first we knew of his illness on the road. In spite of his weakness and the crutch, he looked bright and happy, as did they all. Little Rosamond was opening her



round, bright eyes, for she was just waking up, having been well tucked down in her mother's lap. It did not take long to remove the bars and let our dear folks drive in. They told us that father would bring up the rear with the covered wagon, which he did. He too was well pleased and full of enthusiasm. It seems to me now that we were all young then; even our father was but fifty-one, and the new country and pioneer prospects did not appall him; he felt that the North had opportunities for us all.

The wagon he brought was one of the United States Army make and was a heavy two-horse one, well loaded with their goods; soon we were busy getting out bedding for our now greatly increased family. Great was Brother William's joy at having his young wife and sweet babe given back to him. Rosamond was about sixteen months old, a fine, thrifty child who could make sentences and was a joy to us all. My own heart was so hungry for mother and father that I could not think of their living any place but with us, and they did stay quite a while, until we felt more reconciled to their establishing themselves in a permanent home of their own. Mr. Stanley later went down with father to St. Paul and they brought up the remaining goods.

When the busy week was over and Sunday came the entire settlement had heard of the new arrivals. In those days the only place to meet new neighbors was at the schoolhouse — as yet no churches had been built — and at the church services at Deacon Dam's schoolhouse we all appeared. Deacon Dam was a good Baptist brother and a leading spirit in the district some three or four miles north from Pearl Lake. In this schoolhouse, whose designation when emphasized by the schoolboys was either startling or smile provoking, the Baptists endeavored to keep up regular meetings, monthly or semi-monthly, and in this place we all gathered and were well greeted. We went out *en masse*, dressed in our best. The Stanleys were from Ohio and members of the same church, and they seemed proud to introduce their new neighbors. Our people knew how to make friends in a community. Brother Will was a fine looking, portly young man who showed off well in

his broadcloth suit and silk hat. Father wore on dress occasions black broadcloth and a tall, shining silk hat; he never seemed well attired otherwise, and it suited his noble appearance and his unfailing dignity. We women were less distinguished looking, and it will be enough to say that we all had "store bonnets" and some of us had silk dresses.

In early days speculators had entered the country and taken up tracts of land and staked out towns in remote places, perhaps on some lake shore among timber and brush — it was such a one we found on Pearl Lake. This lake was a fine sheet of water, almost a perfect circle. It was about two miles in diameter and had one narrow outlet and two inlets. It was fed largely from marshes; on the east side the beach was sandy and made a fine place for bathing, while the west side was wet and marshy. On this west side was a farm with good buildings for those early times — a frame house with eight rooms and a large frame barn. Here by the beautiful lakelet was a staked-out town named Yarmouth. The only improvement on the new town site was a small house of two rooms. It was but a short distance from father's house, which was known as the Cutter Place. The projectors broke up and a merchant from St. Cloud had the property on his hands; and as fire in those times was often started by campers, this embryonic new town was endangered and it seemed quite unlikely to grow after all. Indeed its one house perished after many years without an inhabitant. New countries see many an experiment.

Father had found out by this time that the Cutter Place was to be sold at a bargain, so it came to pass that he went up to learn more about it, and found it could be bought for one thousand dollars. There was already on it a large field of spring wheat which was up and growing, and this he purchased for an additional hundred dollars. Thus it was that our people came into possession of a good house and barn and one hundred and forty acres of new land. Father afterward bought railroad land adjoining him on the north, which furnished both woodland and pasture.

How happy we were when we were all settled and together! Sister Ida in her own vivacious way told us the incidents of



## CHAPTER XIII

### LIFE IN THE 'SIXTIES



It was harvest time, in August, 1862, when the Sioux Indians came down upon the defenseless settlers in a simultaneous uprising. I remember the effect of this upon our family, although we had little of which to complain when we compared ourselves with the hundreds who suffered the loss of all their possessions and saw their own people meet most cruel death at the hands of Little Crow and his band. Sister Ida writes of those first days in August:

I shall never forget one Sunday afternoon about the first of August, when I went over to Lake Carnelian to call on the family of Aunt Eliza Vandervort and found a dozen or so of Indians lounging about the house and yard to whom she had given dinner. Again about two weeks later, on a Saturday afternoon, I drove over to Aunt Eliza's and brought her daughter Mary home with me. We went to bed at the usual time, but it seemed to both of us that the very air was filled with strange mystery; it was as though we young girls had some presage of the silent, stealthy oncoming of savages on a near to-morrow to begin their cruel and bloodthirsty onslaught. We could not sleep, so we got up and went down to the lake lying in glorious moonlight. We thought that would quiet us, but not so. Then we tried other rooms in the house and more walking, but not until morning did we sleep.

After the long years, one can but shudder yet to think of those two young girls walking out in the bright moonlight in



Pearl Lake House



the very dead of night with the air full of premonition of most awful tragedy. It shows how unprepared was everyone for that bloody page in the history of Minnesota. As I think of it now it seems to me that few stories that have been written have a scene more romantic and startling than that of two young girls wandering down by a reedy lakeside, with the dark woods and underbrush all about them, in the utter loneliness and loveliness of a moonlight night in a new country; and no one knows how near at the very moment were skulking savages with all barbarous means of murder!

Brother William had come over from the Shadow to help my husband with his harvesting, and in turn Alvah was to help William. They had cut down a lot of grain, but some was still lying in the swath unbound. Alvah and I were sitting in the shade of our cabin when I noticed a cloud of dust arising over the brush as I looked down the road. Soon a man on horseback emerged from the brush and came in sight; he advanced with leaps to our bars and called my husband. I noticed that they plunged into an earnest conversation, and then the horseman passed swiftly on. I soon learned that he was a messenger to tell us that the Indians had broken out and were killing people and burning buildings and grain some forty miles west, and no mistake. We knew that no time was to be lost, and the first thing for us to do was to inform the dear family at Pearl Lake, four miles distant. Alvah walked over to father's and he said he could but pause, when he reached the home, in dread to disturb that peaceful scene. Mother was sitting on the side porch mending clothes for father and Brother Joe to wear in the harvest field, for the grain was now fully ripe and waving in the sunshine. She was singing a quiet little song to herself. The cool shade of those noble old forest trees lay with its usual refreshing relief from the hot summer sun. The lake was still and glossy, reflecting the trees along its margin. Now and then there was a flash of wild ducks dipping down for fish, all making a picture of such exquisite beauty and peace that Alvah hesitated as he stood in mother's quiet presence. At last he found words to tell her that the Indians were upon our border, and flight was the only thing for us. In our house



Mr. Cutter had built, just behind the stove, a brick oven in which twelve loaves of bread could be baked at one time. In this oven was mother's bread, already made for the harvest on the morrow. Father was out mowing a swath around the field to admit the harvesters. When he learned the alarming news he left his coat on a stump, took his scythe, and followed Alvah to the house, where they made arrangements to leave the next morning. Mother had received the information with her usual poise and arose to meet this new experience, and with faith in God she began her preparations quietly. The new bread was packed in a chest with other things to be taken for our journey; some bedding, a camp kettle and teapot, essential things only, were packed away in the army wagon with its white cover.

In our little home by Lake Carnelian I was busily collecting the articles I thought we might most need in our flight, and all the time Mr. Frost was gone to warn the people at Pearl Lake I was hastening our preparations as best I could, feeling it were enough could we all but escape with our lives. I had not known what real fear was before that hour which changed our calm to turmoil, and I think I have not suffered groundless fear since I learned the real sensation when we were fleeing for our lives from the Indians.

The Mississippi River divided the land of the Dakotas from the land of the Chippewas who were deadly enemies; wherever they met, whether in St. Paul or on the plains, they fought to the death. Our idea was to leave the west side of the Mississippi and cross over to the east, where the Chippewas lived, as they were peaceful. Thus we could make our way to Fort Snelling if it should be found necessary. Our aim was to leave the country before the enemy got possession, as the road to the river was through timber and hazel brush, and if the deadly Sioux once got in ambush there we would be obliged to have an escort of soldiers if we escaped at all.

Father and mother left their home the morning following the alarm. After all was ready for their departure, father went back to the house and knelt there to pray that the Lord would protect his house and property, and leaving all in the

hands divine they turned from that new home, established in confidence, to flee for their lives. Perhaps it may be fitting to state here that although he never entered that field even to look it over for four weeks, still the grain stood up well and was harvested by armed men eight weeks after, the twenty acres yielding two hundred bushels of as good wheat as we had ever seen; and the winter following, what fine bread mother made in the brick oven from the flour of that wheat! Father's losses were really nothing to record.

The next morning Mr. Frost and I saw the white covered wagon coming through the brush, with our parents and Sister Ida and "Aunt" Eliza Vandervort and her daughters, Mary and Jennie, within it. We had tied up some bundles of bedding and prepared some things to be sent to the fort which the citizens of that region were determined to build. I gave directions for my dishes to be placed in tubs and buried in the garden. I took along with me the new britannia teapot which mother bought that day in Cincinnati as a part of my wedding outfit, also a choice little sauce pan, but we bade farewell to everything else, believing all we left in the house might be destroyed. We joined our people in the covered wagon and turned our backs on home and our first harvest, in the swath as it was, and passed on for the ferry at Clearwater, twelve miles distant. Our party of eight with bedding made a pretty good load, but we did not attempt to go very rapidly.

Meanwhile the residents about Maine Prairie decided to build a blockhouse and stockade and try in this way to take care of their harvest while protecting themselves; they also called upon the government for aid. In less than a week the fort was up and ready for occupancy. William and Joseph remained and helped to build the fort, and so they and Julia and little Rosamond were among those who found refuge there.

At Clearwater we were to cross the Mississippi, and then we would be in the country formerly owned by the Chippewas, of whom, although they were a more peaceable tribe than the Sioux, we entertained some grave apprehensions. However, we soon found out that they were up at Mille Lac. When we arrived at Clearwater we found the road lined with people

in wagons and almost every kind of turnout, even to sleds drawn by oxen. What a procession was that so hurriedly collected; what tales of horror the hosts of refugees told: they were enough to freeze the blood! I can see father yet as he stood waiting for the ferry boat to return for us, while he had in his hand *The St. Paul Pioneer Press*, which confirmed the tales we had heard. It was our first authentic account of the magnitude of the outbreak. It was no scare, but a well-defined plot to sweep the entire valley of the Minnesota River. So sudden and unexpected was the descent upon the defenseless frontier that hundreds were killed in cold blood without a moment's warning. In the early morning women were killed while milking in their barnyards, killed by Indians with whom they had been on the best of terms. Thus was the happy and prosperous country transformed in one brief hour into one of the most fearful scenes of carnage which our land was ever called upon to witness.

The refugees were from all classes and countries; the sick were placed on litters and carried or moved in sleds drawn by oxen; children were born in camps, churches and school buildings; dairy men left their cellars full of butter and cheese; farmers their harvest and stack yards to be the prey of cruel savages who burned and destroyed everything before them. We could the more readily realize this, for wounded people were among the crowd to be taken over that day; and oh, the awful confusion! We breathed more easily when we were out of the enemy's country. Aunt Eliza took ill with a severe sick headache, and it was hard on her to be obliged to travel when she was so sick. We made her as comfortable as we could and kept on our way, as we wanted to gain Clear Lake, where there was a tavern in whose shelter we were anxious to spend the night.

We were now on the east side of the Mississippi, on the trail between St. Cloud and St. Paul. This trail was crowded by refugees; they were in every imaginable condition, as I have said. All that night at Clear Lake Tavern I could hear the multitudes as they drove their cattle and flocks, taking them to Fort Snelling. Oh, if we could only have awakened to find

it all a horrible dream of the night; but the morning only showed us the hurried path toward Fort Snelling! The next day we reached the Heath Settlement, where our church friends had a preaching point and there we decided to stay for a time with good and kind people we knew. Father preached on Sunday, and the next Monday we heard that the Chippewas were restless and that an outbreak of this tribe was also feared, so we thought it better to go on toward Fort Snelling. We who had thought to find homes and prosperity and to join in building up a young state were now being forced day by day farther from our hopeful beginnings and leaving behind us three of our own—to what fate we dared not consider, nor could we hope to hear the outcome for them very soon.

A history of the Indian massacre speaks of our part of the country as follows:

At Maine Prairie, a point southwest of St. Cloud and distant about fifteen miles, a determined band of farmers united together with minds firmly fixed that they would not be driven out by an inferior force. This locality was a small prairie entirely surrounded by timber and dense thickets, a circumstance that seemed to favor the near approach of the stealthy savages. By a concerted action they soon erected a substantial fortification constructed of a double row of timbers. Tamarack trees were brought from a near-by swamp and set firmly in the ground. The building was two stories in height, the upper story being for the women and children, while the lower was intended to be of a more strictly military character. The government furnished them with arms and supplies, and provisions were laid in for a possible siege. People from other small places came in until there was a small garrison. They kept up military drill and had out their pickets.

Sister Ida tells us that Freeland Dam was the young architect and contractor, and that his selection was wise and all gladly worked under his direction. She also speaks of the casks of drinking water kept with the stores in the lower story of the fort. While it was being constructed Brother Joe was stopping at a neighbor's each night. One time he was awakened by the noise of horses' hoofs coming up to the log house where he was staying. He got up and leaned out of the window and saw some ponies with packs on their backs but

no riders in evidence. It was afterward decided that the "packs" were Indians lying flat on their saddles scouting to learn if the white settlers were preparing to resist them.

At last the settlers were inside the fort they had constructed. Few of the adults remain to tell the story of those thrilling days, but I remember some of the accounts. A family had come in from Melrose or near there, a place southeast of father's, and they became homesick and thought that as all seemed quiet they would get in their wagon and drive over to their home. Their way led along near the shore of Pearl Lake among the heavy brush. All went well until they came opposite father's barn, when they heard some one inside rattling chains — the chains belonged to some well buckets which father had bought for a new well he was digging. They stopped and looked about. The road turned at this point, and they discovered to the west on the bluffs Indians on their ponies riding in the direction of the fort, completely heading off the possibility of a retreat to the fort. At this they turned their oxen about with all haste to seek the shelter of father's house. At this turn a number of Indians sprang out from their ambush of thick brush, and one of the white men took deliberate aim and fired at one of the savages, who threw up his hands and fell back. As the front gate to father's yard was open, they urged the oxen on through until they fell exhausted at the front door.

When they had broken into our mother's kitchen they built a fire and molded bullets. In this party was a man and his wife and children and a bachelor; the latter volunteered to go to the fort and return with an armed force. The poor, frightened man went down to the shore of our Lake Pearl and slipped along among the overhanging bushes till he came within sound of harvesters, who were reaping the grain in companies under guard. When the reapers saw the man they knew without a word what had happened, as he stood speechless, pale, and trembling. They asked him if he had seen Indians, and he nodded. The farmers were soon upon the scene, and found the party quite ready to return to the fort and remain there until the leaves fell in October. They looked



over our grounds and found that the Indians had stabled their horses in father's barn and had eaten plums from our trees. The Indian was not found whom the Melrose people were supposed to have mortally wounded, if not instantly killed, in the brush near Pearl Lake Place; it was a habit of the Indians to conceal their losses by carrying away the dead and wounded from battlefields wherever possible.

While all these terrible things were going on about our new homes, which we had founded in such expectation and joy, we of the Watkins refugees were approaching nearer Fort Snelling. We stopped at Anoka, then a new lumber town on the shore of the Rum River near its confluence with the Mississippi. Here Alvah's teacher and friend still lived, kind Mrs. Waterhouse. She was a young widow of the War of the Rebellion, her husband being among those who fell in the battle of Bull Run. She lived in a good home with her widowed mother and little daughter, and she kindly opened her rooms to us. It was thought best for us to remain here and not go on to Fort Snelling. We had been out about six weeks, and as the Indians were less active father and Joe decided to take the risk and return. Mother stayed with Alvah and me at the home of Mrs. Waterhouse. Father took the Vandervorts and Sister Ida with him, while Brother Joe drove the one-horse express wagon. Father's load being heavy, after they crossed at Clearwater, Joseph drove on ahead. Night came on and it grew so dark that the horses could not see to follow the road. The girls wanted to get out and find the road, but father would not let them, but got out and held to the harness until he found the horses' heads, and then by getting down on his hands and knees he found the road.

Sister Ida writes of that awful night, of twelve miles' drive through heavy timber with dark night coming on, a black road in front, and danger of savages in ambush. No wonder that they made the journey with palpitating hearts. We in Anoka shuddered for them, but it seemed best for them to go as Sister Julia was needing help to cook for the harvesting crew, and our little sister was no coward, though she admits she was not "over pleased with the idea" of returning; but that



very feeling, of course, made her act the braver. She says: "A few days before our arrival an alarm had been given by the lookout at the fort that two peculiar objects were approaching. All was excitement. It was soon discovered that these were two women, fugitives from the Indians, who had escaped with the help of a friendly Indian after suffering the most dreadful hardships and abuses. They were almost barefooted, and their clothes were torn to rags. They were taken in, fed, clothed, and escorted on their way."

Ida also tells about finding our relatives at the fort, and thus describes their life there: "Our arrival was hailed with joy by our brothers and sister-in-law. Each family had moved some kind of a shanty up to the fort, so quite a little town was formed about the defense, and here the cooking was done. We got up early in the morning to go outside the fort and get lunches ready for the men before they started out under protection to do the yet unfinished harvesting. We slept within the stockade in a great room upstairs. The arrangement of our sleeping room was ever mirth provoking to me, for this vast bedroom was divided only by quilts and blankets, old carpet; in fact, anything that would hang up. These *apartments* were just large enough for our beds; first a straw bed was brought in and laid upon the floor, then the feather beds were placed on top, and there was just about two feet of space left between the beds of each. I could always see the funny side of things, and there was much happened even inside a fort that struck my sense of the ridiculous. I looked upon all the happenings as an 'experience.' Time passed in work, for there was much to do. Baking, washing, ironing, making, and mending — they helped to keep our minds more at rest while our fingers flew.

"We were at the fort all through October. The three months — September, October, and November — were the most beautiful I had ever known, warm, sunny, and still. It truly seemed providential, so all the harvesting and stacking of grain could be done; but at last the November frosts did come, and the leaves, the shield for skulking Indians, fell, and the red men slunk back to their reservations. At the end of

October, Brother Will and his wife and baby, Brother Joe and I went home. Julia and I had to stay all day alone, and we were ever on the alert if we heard any strange noise. Our hearts would throw on high pressure as we quickly ran to the door, to see perhaps a stray dog disappearing, and that was all.

"We were living at this time in Brother Will's claim shanty, but for better protection during the late fall and the winter all gathered naturally at father's house on Pearl Lake. There we were, Brother Will and wife and Baby Rosamond, Sister Julia and husband and sweet Baby Charlie, besides our dear parents and Joe and I. Many interesting incidents occurred during that time. One that I have so often thought of was the teaching of Baby Rosamond in a truly orthodox manner to say her little prayer, 'Now I lay me'—of which she was very fond, thinking it a little story, no doubt. Once saying it did not seem to satisfy, and her petition always ended up with 'More Loid, Aunt Ida, more Loid.'

"I cannot leave this page without one more remembrance of my girlhood days, and that is a tribute to the loveliness of the old home on that lake of beauty. I would go away to teach about May first, and in those days the spring did not seem to come so early as now, for well do I remember that the only green spots then to be seen would be in the marshes and in little low places along the roadside. After three months of absence I would return, to find a wonderful transformation had taken place. The trees were in full leaf, the flowers in bloom, the birds in glorious concert everywhere, and there our lovely Lake Pearl stretched out its crystal beauty, reflecting every leafy tree and slender reed around its shores; what a chalice of emerald it was! The waterfowl upon its quiet bosom, the wild cry of the loon to its mate—small wonder I walked in a daze until my eyes had registered every detail on my brain! Out from the rare loveliness of those long-gone summertimes shone the dearest sight of all, the calm and gentle face at the door to greet me—my mother, with a welcoming smile for her youngest. The handsome, white-haired father was there, too, with a glad greeting for his daughter, and then the brown-eyed younger brother of our family, upon whom all depended in their

age. All, all are gone; but I thank the Lord that such a home and such a memory remains to me through the years."

We stayed on in the home of Mrs. Waterhouse until after the birth of our first child, Charles Emerson, on October 4, 1862. My husband's sister, Elmina Frost (Mrs. E. F. Brown Gordon), was with me and was a good help. I recovered rapidly from this momentous experience, and in three weeks I felt strong enough for the return home, although I knew how much I risked; and I remember to this far-away day what I endured on that journey of two days' duration. It turned zero weather, and when we reached the crossing our ferry boat was the last one for the season. I was well wrapped in blankets and had my fine baby boy of twelve pounds in my arms; I kept him there, not venturing to hand him over to mother for even a little change; for the wind was sweeping, bitter cold, and I feared to expose my little one in the least, so I sat in one position through all the long and weary miles. Whatever the physical discomfort, I was going home and my heart was singing for joy! Emerson Vandervort was driving us back, Alvah and the others having all preceded us. Late in the afternoon of the second day we took the home folks by surprise. Alvah had planned to go down in the carriage and bring us home in good form, but now that we were united once more we could just be glad and satisfied, and go to work to begin life anew.

My buried wedding dishes were exhumed from their imperfect burial in the garden, and though the Indians had left them untouched, one of the steers had not — he had jumped over the garden fence and walked over our "buried treasure," breaking some of the dishes, though we counted this but a small loss. We could but look with dismay upon the wreck of the fine garden we had planted so hopefully in the spring upon our rich claim. It was our new household's first real garden. We had set out four hundred cabbage plants which, when we left, were already giving promise of a large yield; corn, potatoes, beans,— all had been given into the care of the rich earth by us and then left. How hard Alvah had worked over that garden, and now what a ruin! The fence was poor, and cows,

pigs, and live stock generally had been turned loose and had utterly destroyed that first little Eden of ours. The wheat we left in the gavel was ruined. That in the shock was sprouted and our bread was black and sticky, while father's grain, which had been left standing, was all right; the yield of "fife" wheat from it recorded previously was considered phenomenal. When he found his wheat standing, his buildings safe, and his home almost as he had left it, although the refugees had left it unlocked when they moved on, we may be well assured that our pious father poured out his heart in gratitude for the marvelous deliverance from the hands of the destroying savages. These feelings were enhanced as we read of the atrocities of that reign of terror in 1862.

After a family council had deliberated on the whole outlook and present situation, we concluded it was best for us to stay together in father's house at Pearl Lake Place. Alvah and I had rooms upstairs, and Brother Will and Julia had the parlor for their bedroom, while they cooked and ate at the family table. We had our kitchen upstairs and so we lived together through the long, cold winter and laid plans for the coming spring. We talked over our strenuous summer and fall as well, and mutually described our experiences when so hastily separated. One of the tales of life in the fort was of Dick Vandervort's bear. I remember it well upon its first appearance. One day as Dick was returning from Elk River, driving through a grove of popples he heard a strange noise, and looking up to the spot from which the sound proceeded he saw a black bear cub, aged about six months. To Dick's surprise he found the cub was dragging a chain which was fastened around his neck and had become entangled and wrapped around the trunk of a tree, so the runaway was securely fastened. Dick released the captive and found he was at least partially tame, so he put him under his buggy seat and drove on. When he reached our house he drove up in front and announced that he had found a "b'ar." I made him repeat the word several times, for I did not understand his "b'ar." "Come out," he said at last, "and look under the buggy seat and see my b'ar"—he was mispronouncing for

fun. I went out to see what he had found, and there was a very warm and thirsty cub. Dick told me to bring out a bowl of bread and milk and his young bruin would perform. I did so, and Master Cub skillfully ate the bread by using his paw for a spoon, and when he had extracted all the bread he took up the bowl and drank the milk. After dinner Dick took his "b'ar" home to their house on Carnelian Lake. There was a tree near it, bent just right for a perch for the cub, and he would climb up to it the length of his chain which was fastened to the tree, and stretch himself on the bend and go to sleep. The way he could be enticed down was to show him a bowl of bread and milk, when he would speedily come down from his perch.

When the fort was built Dick and his bear were two of the first occupants. The latter was growing fatter and older all the time, and alas, crosser, too. He used to chase the children in the fort out to the length of his chain. When he one day tore Rosamond's little dress they thought it was time to do away with Dick's "b'ar," and so he was slaughtered and his meat was sold to the refugees in the fort — a fine, tender treat.

Our folks told us of the raw recruits, called the militia, sent out to guard the fort, but the boys called them instead "water-melon thieves" because of their unbounded appetite for melons and the fact that the most they did was to rob the melon patches of the settlers. Inside the fort or out, most of the refugees felt that an Indian stood over them with a tomahawk all the time and that they were constantly in danger of cruel death; and yet Julia and Ida told of a woman who scoured her steel knives three times a day and took all the usual care about her things as though she were at home, while some women felt it was a useless exertion and fairly sacrilegious to wash dish towels that might never be used again! In an abstract office of her own in the city of Dayton, Ohio, little Rosamond is far away from a stockade and red men and bear cubs, and would scarcely recognize herself as a round-faced, tiny child in the midst of a wild frontier life; so rapidly do the years bring their changes that I often fancy I am left dreaming alone.

It was November, and the work of our springtime had been



fruitless; the summer had been spent in the turmoil of the Sioux uprising, with no time to properly harvest our fields, and now a hard winter was upon us who were collected at Pearl Lake Place. Did Sister Julia dream sometimes of the generous roof of Green Tree, where in peace and plenty she had lived with her brothers and sisters with never a fear of what man could do? Did my little sister think of those bright opportunities of youth in Ohio, and consider favorably the case of a certain soldier by name Datus Ensign Myers? Did the dear little mother regret the walnut tree and the home where her children had grown to manhood and womanhood? Did I think of the old familiar haunts, the road to Cincinnati, the safe, undisturbed homes I used to pass? Yes, I think our memories and our hearts went back sometimes to Ohio, and I am sure our parents and we ourselves missed the church fellowship, the large gatherings of those of our faith, and the influence of College Hill; but Julia had her bright-eyed baby Rosamond developing rapidly day by day, and I had my beautiful first-born, while Ida had her dreams of the future, and we all looked forward to larger and better things; we were not for giving up yet.

Our table was rather meager that long drawn out winter after the massacre. We had bought half a steer and had frozen up the meat in a box out on the porch; this did well for a while, but it continued frozen and became quite tasteless. Our only vegetable was the potato, and that not of the best. I grew tired of everything. One day Mrs. Stanley brought us a pail of sauer kraut, which helped us to find a little appetite; to this day we thank her for it. As spring approached, our men folk began to lay definite plans for the coming season, and decided to try farming on a larger scale; so they rented more land and put in corn and wheat. I remember now how the pioneer women turned out that year to help their men; we shared in planting a field of corn on father's place. Sister Julia and I let mother look after our babies while we went over in the field to drop corn for the boys. We were not used to that kind of work; I remember that it was about all we could do to walk home to dinner, and we had to give up for that day. We



planted a large garden near the house, making our bright plans all over again, and feeling that we were going to have a real outcome of our labor this year.

The day our boys sowed spring wheat it rained enough to lay the dust, and then it never rained a single drop until the day they cut and brought in the poor yield of grain. This season so discouraged Brother William that he made up his mind to return to Ohio. The Civil War was still keeping the country terrorized. The oft-occurring battles with their cannonading were supposed to be a real cause of our drought; after every battle there were copious showers in the vicinity of the battle-grounds, but away up north no clouds were precipitated. Where we had chosen our home the rainless condition worked disastrously for the marsh lands. In former years about where we lived was a great cranberry country; the immense peat bogs produced fine crops of this wild fruit. In those awful days of drought these marshes caught fire and destroyed both the cranberries and the peat. There was not only this destruction, but the people who had depended on the marsh lands for hay lost all their crop, even after they had cut and stacked the hay on the ground. For weeks the sun was but a great copper-colored ball which cast a mournful shadow upon the scene of a burning country, and we could but feel the depression of those dim, smoky days.

The Indians were still scouting about, stealing horses and keeping the settlers in terror, but as we had suffered so much loss by the flight of the year before we all thought we would risk it at home. The government armed the settlers and furnished ammunition. I can yet hear how Brother Joe would bring the muskets down on the upper landing, making the whole house ring and my nerves quake. There he stood guard all night, or reclined with at least one eye open. The horses were brought into the dooryard and hay was fed to them under our bedroom window. Well we knew that if Indians came about the horses would give warning, acting like mad.

One evening when we were feeling particularly depressed, Julia and Will brought their bed into our room and laid it on the floor, that we might be near each other. In the night



Datus Ensign Myers, aged 21



Ida Watkins Myers



Brother Joe was suddenly startled by hearing something out by the front gate, which he thought might be Indians, and he came in to tell Will to make ready the guns. We waited with trembling hearts in the darkness for a time, but heard nothing further, so Joe decided to go out to the barn and examine the gate. He found all quiet, the horses grazing in the brush quite undisturbed, and no sign of intruders. Our suspense may be imagined when our brother was taking this risk; we were indeed greatly alarmed, and thought death from a savage club or tomahawk might await him at any instant, but God saw fit to protect him and us, for some good purpose, we believe. Our brother certainly showed real bravery that night; and all through our commotion upstairs, which was mostly a perturbation of spirit, our parents downstairs slept on in the care of Him whom they so trusted. Indeed I do not think they would have locked the doors if we had allowed them so to remain.

The uneasy days crept on, and we were still startled by Indian alarms. The Sunday after the Fourth of July in 1863, when Vicksburg surrendered, as we were about to enter the church at Fairhaven for services, a man upon a foaming steed came dashing up to alarm the citizens by saying that a murdered man had been found in the woods. There was no sermon that day; neighbor turned to neighbor with white, startled face, and the very summer sunshine grew murky with our fears. As we drove home one looked to the right, the other to the left, watching for a savage, painted face to peer out through the underbrush.

Men loaded a wagon with lumber and proceeded to the spot, about five miles south of Fairhaven, where the victim, James McGannon, lay. They found the body near a tree, where the Indian who shot him had ambushed. The trail in the dust showed where the body had been dragged into the woods out of sight of the road. Our brothers were among the number who went out to the place, and Brother William marked with black paint the ambush tree and with a piece of board the place McGannon had fallen and also his grave. They made a coffin from the boards they had taken out and gave the body burial. The mail carrier afterward informed us that he had met Mr.

McGannon riding along in the woods on a good horse and halted to ask him the time, and found it was just a little after noon. He rode on into the deep, dark forest on that Fourth of July we were celebrating a few miles away, to meet a tragic death. Once again our hearts sank with apprehension.

In the spring, April 10, 1863, a little babe came to Brother William's home, bringing a bright gleam of joy in the midst of shadowed days. She was named Helen May — our "Little Nell." Small and delicate indeed she was, weighing about five pounds at birth. She was quite a contrast in appearance to the first, Rosamond. The latter was round faced and brown eyed, while Nell had very blue eyes with a fair complexion and a forehead of the Watkins type, high and full. They were of that pleasing contrast which made them a pretty pair together. In a very few weeks after her birth the baby began to thrive, and what a joy she was to us all! Many times I held her in my arms as though she were my own. Her little mother had gone through much distress from the awful fears of those days, for though naturally brave, it was impossible for her not to feel terrible forebodings when such tales of massacre and flight were coming to us daily. She had little nourishment to give her baby until she was back in her old home in Ohio, and then there was plenty. Many a midnight hour brought Sister Julia to my bedside with her little hungry baby, and glad was I that I had more than Charlie boy needed; those days drew us all together. It is good that her bright mind and John Truesdell's scholarship are not without a witness, though in their youth they passed from the scenes of earth. Their son, William Watkins Truesdell, has already reached young manhood, and we are thankful.

When Nell was about six months old, Brother William decided to return to Ohio. The Indian massacre, the drought, and the uncertain state of our country all made it seem wise for them to leave, as Brother William's attainments were of more value in a state like Ohio. I can imagine how happy Sister Julia was when she saw once more the wide, sheltering roofs of her relatives and with her two dear little girls was safe in a land of established homes. They never again went out of that



Adelaide Gail Frost



William Watkins Frost



Helen May Watkins





state to live, though our brother taught in various places within its limits.

The last fifty years is a record of growth which would do credit to any state; indeed the triumph over adverse circumstances in this period of Minnesota's history seems to me to stand without a parallel in the history of northlands. In our libraries are many accurate histories of men who came early into this fair land and saw that it "was good," and when the savage red man with fire and tomahawk drove out those first settlers, still they remained of unconquered determination. It is true that the savages killed over two thousand of these brave frontier men, but those who remained fought on, and fought it out, and bought peace with the sword. Farmers came back, built again their cabins and barns, followed the plough and planted once more their burnt fields; they survived drought and insect pests, and laid the foundations of a great and prosperous state. If one could read all that those brave hearts felt and minds determined, of the tragedy and disappointment, of the successes they carved out with their own hands, of all that they wrought and all they dreamed and never told save in their beautiful farms and their cattle in a thousand meadows, their great barns and trees on sometime treeless prairies, their fine roads where once was but the mark of dragging tepee poles,— if one could know all that they initiated and brought to perfection of what we see to-day, then each family of the pioneers would possess as stirring a record as any pen of fiction has ever written. We see to-day but their monuments in the deeds they have done, leaving their descendants leisure to advance their school systems, to build hospitals and libraries and churches and universities; shall the pioneers be forgotten as long as the highways they constructed remain?

It is difficult to think to-day how poor were the means of transportation in those days; the freighters' carts were a sight to remember, and I shall never forget my first view of a Red River cart. Early one spring morning in 1863 we were out on our side porch at Pearl Lake Place, when from over the lake we heard a strange noise, unlike anything we had ever before heard. Soon our entire family was out to divine if

possible what the sound could be. The loud squeaking, screeching, seemed to be approaching nearer and nearer and louder and louder; then we heard the brush cracking and the heavy tramp of an animal, and at last from the hazel bushes emerged the head of an ox, and then a cart loaded with furs. "The oldest inhabitant" told us this was no other than a Red River cart away from Canada, and that they came through for the furs collected by Mr. Stanley and other trappers and hunters. All winter the Stanleys had been trapping muskrats, weasels, raccoons, skunks, etc. This Red River half-breed was gathering up the accumulations of the winter's trapping.

Later on in our travels about the state we met long trains of these Red River carts. They were a home invention, made entirely of wood and rawhide, having wheels without tires, two in number, and single shafts for a horse or ox, generally the latter. The ones we saw later went in long trains, with but one driver to four carts; an ox was attached to each and the carts were hitched tandem, thus requiring but the one driver for all four carts. Their speed was about fifteen miles a day, and it took a train about a month to come from Pembina, Canada, to St. Paul. At night they formed a circular corral of carts, with the shafts directed outward and the camp in the center, thus improvising a fort; they watched their cattle by turns, to prevent a stampede by enemies. When the train arrived in St. Paul they would go into camp near some lake, where they were a source of great interest, especially to newcomers. The French and Indian half-breed drivers appeared in all the glory of their picturesque costumes; this dress included the beautiful Pembina sash. These gay girdles are gone, but the dress of the Red River drivers is represented on the walls of the Minnesota Historical Society and the Minnesota Club in St. Paul in the portrait of the celebrated Joe Rolette. We had good opportunities for seeing these figures in the early commerce of the North when in St. Cloud, for that was an important place on their route, and in 1867 became their terminus.

Drivers and carts have vanished with the advance of civilization; no more will the new-comer be startled by the

loud squeaking of those wheels without tires or any metal, nor shall we see again the then common sight of canvas covers protecting loads of furs. Their deep and wide track is, I dare say, entirely obliterated from the prairies and wiped from the swamps which they were especially adapted to crossing. No more they fight their hereditary enemies the Sioux (for the half-breeds had Chippewa blood); I can remember them, and yet the people, their trade, their vehicles, their very pathways, seem to have passed from Minnesota.

Before I close this chapter I must relate the sadness that came to my husband and me in the early years of our married life. It was the time of the early breaking up of a long and severe winter. The deep snow was badly drifted so travel was tedious and almost impassable at times. As I have recorded, my husband was an evangelist of the Christian Church and had often to be away from me and our first baby boy. We were living at Plainview, Minnesota, when our Charlie was taken ill. His father had gone to the southern part of the state to meet some appointments and was to be away about two weeks. Before he left us he made preparations for his departure by getting a fine lot of fuel ready for us, and as we were both quite well then no forebodings of coming ill clouded those last days.

Alvah was to travel down to a place called Pickwick with a young man who was a good friend and helper. Two horses and a rather long home-made sleigh were to convey them to their destination. Charlie and I stood at the window and waved the farewells as they drove away over the country covered with the snow of many months' accumulation. In a short time I discovered my darling was restless and feverish, and in spite of all my care he grew rapidly worse. I called a doctor, but not for a day could I note that he got any better. I did not receive letters as I expected, so concluded when the time set for my husband's return arrived that he was surely coming home. I tried to encourage the dear child that papa would soon be home, and I eagerly watched every sleigh that came down the road, but they all passed on. The church folks came in and helped me nights, but at last I saw he was surely slipping

away from me; and one day he looked up at me and said, "Papa never come!" He never asked for his father again.

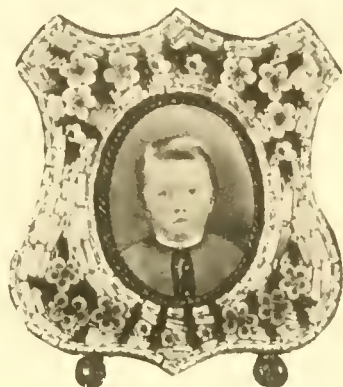
Little did I know of what was happening down in the Grant neighborhood—that my husband was lying there ill with catarrhal fever. One night during his illness he had a troubled dream and interpreted it to mean that either Charlie or I was ill, or, worse, that death would occur. It left such a painful impression on his mind that he told the friends where he was stopping that he was going home, and that they must make a bed in the sleigh and give him jugs of hot water to keep him from chilling, and that he would lie down in the sleigh and drive home, some fifty miles distant. They believed this most hazardous, but he felt he must go and they did as he requested. They handed him the lines and he started. Long before the day was done the sled came down, breaking the jugs and spilling the water so his clothes were wet in places; and there he had to climb out in the snow, sick as he was, and try to repair the sled.

Fortunately a man came along and helped him, so he could proceed on his way until he came to Rosemount, where was a Dutch tavern, and there he found a clean warm place for the night. The next morning he started on the home stretch. As he went up from the valley and was looking on a ridge he saw a team coming, which he recognized as Brother Shoemaker's. When they were close enough he called out and asked the driver who was sick—was it his wife or baby? When told it was Charlie, he knew how serious it must be. He reached home about noon, but too late to be recognized by his beloved child. Early in the morning he had been stricken by death, and although he did not pass away until dark of that sad March day, March 13, 1865, he never gained consciousness; and so it was that he left our home desolate.

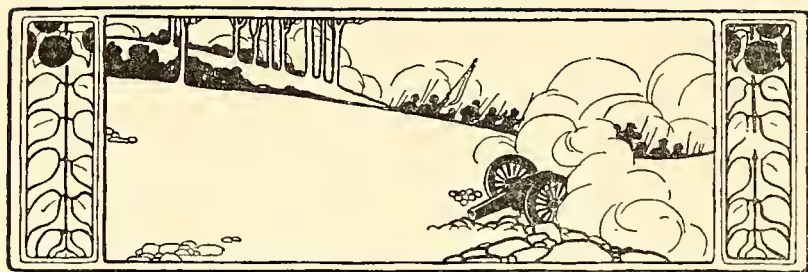
After this sad event Mr. Frost's health received such a shock that for months he was unable to resume his evangelistic duties. We buried Charlie in a new cemetery, where through all the long years while we have come and gone, and set up our home in different states, the little form of our first born has rested in quiet sleep. Our promising little boy, gentle

and affectionate of disposition, had been our joy and solace, and the grief at our deprivation need not be dwelt upon, for even yet, after half a century, it is hard to recall this time and I am thankful that I can end this chapter by saying:

“Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal.”







## CHAPTER XIV

### SKETCHES FROM THE LIFE OF OUR SISTER



AR back to trundle-bed years flies my mind to-night, and I feel again the sudden nestling of a little round figure close into my arms. Old Bose, the watchdog, is barking fiercely outside, and my little sister is startled. Perhaps again the baby has had a bad dream and, frightened, she climbs over the footboard into our parents' bed and slips into mother's arms. Oh, as I recall it now, how like the influence of Paradise is such a home of love, where the children have such a heavenly faith in the care and protection of their parents! As I live back there for a little while in that past, whose sweet influence is mine forever, I think that one half its brightness had been left out if the youngest had not come into our lives. It is a joy to trace down through the years the course of her life, for she touches with bright and tender glows many of the shadowy places, and her loyalty has stood the tests of time.

When in her light-hearted youth she came to Minnesota, she met with unusual poise whatever the new and strange life brought her; and the novelty made up for the roughnesses of the new way. She taught the children of the pioneers in the log schoolhouse at Lily Pond, where the romance dwelt in pretty lake and lovely wildwood and every haunt of Nature, but where the people were unlettered and living in the most

primitive style. With what lively stories would she regale us at the end of each week! She got on well with the people and made friends throughout all that strip of the Big Woods. She had made up her mind to teach, and accepted the situation as it was in that "neck o' the woods." She brought her money home, and after that taught our Prairie school at Deacon Dani's. That was the summer of the drought of sixty-three.

One Friday evening mother had taken the old horse, Jane, to bring Ida home from her school. The times were quite unsettled; Indian tracks had been found on the sand bar, and no one felt perfectly safe. We were out on the side porch when we heard a commotion in the brush along the lake shore, and soon there emerged from the trees old Jane on the full gallop. Mother held to the lines and she and Ida were safe in the buggy, but she was making every effort to stop the horse, who still came on at full speed. Father was at the barn and rushed out when he heard the noise, and we all gathered to help him stop Jane in her mad career. The old beast had never acted in this fashion before, and so we took it for granted that she had seen a bear or an Indian or had smelt one or the other near, but we never found out for certain. She had kept in the road, so no damage was done except that we got a fright.

Sister had a number of army correspondents, who wrote much war news, and some sent as fine descriptions of army life and events as I have ever read. One correspondent won out in the campaign of Love, and when he was discharged after active and faithful service for Uncle Sam he came to claim our little sister for his bride. As the young soldier was known to us by his family connections our parents gave their consent. The wedding occurred September 13, 1865, at the home on the shores of Pearl Lake. It was such a night as my sister would have chosen had it been made to her order. The moon was at its full and shone over the dark woods with glints of silver across the treetops until it touched our lake and formed that never-to-be-forgotten path of molten gold, gently rippling in the slight breeze of the perfect evening when Ida became Mrs. Datus Ensign Myers. We will let our brother-in-law tell something of his life:

"I was the youngest of twelve children, ten of whom grew to maturity. My maternal grandparents, William McLain and wife, were residents of Pennsylvania in what is now known as the oil region. A small stream ran through their place, the surface of which was covered with oil seepage from the hills. I have often heard my mother tell how the people came and camped by the creek, and secured the oil by spreading blankets upon the water and then wringing out the oil which had been absorbed; thus obtained it was used for medical purposes, and afterward it came to be sold as a medicine and was called Seneca Oil.

"In 1816 my grandfather sold his land in Pennsylvania, which was mostly covered with pine timber, only reserving enough of the timber to cut into logs to make a raft. Upon this raft he placed his family and goods and floated down the Monongahela River into the Ohio, and thence on down that river to Cincinnati. In Cincinnati he sold his raft to the original Nick Longworth, the grandfather of the present congressman, and went back from the city about twenty miles to the west, and bought one hundred and sixty acres of wild land from the government, upon which he brought up his family. I recollect my mother's telling that when he sold his land in Pennsylvania it was paid for in silver, and that the silver was paid out on a table. The man making the purchase said he believed there was a half-bushel of it, so a half-bushel measure was sent for, and it filled it full, rounding measure.

"My paternal grandfather, Adam Myers, was a Hessian soldier from Hesse-Cassel, Germany. The German government agreed to hire to the English a certain number of soldiers, to be paid for, as I recollect, at the rate of four dollars each for those not returned to their own country. The German government procured these soldiers by sending out what was known as a press gang, who caught every young man they found out of employment or without friends in the vicinity and pressed him into the service, and then sold him to the English to join the army in America against the colonies. My grandfather had been bound as an apprentice to learn the blacksmith trade in a town some twenty miles from home, and had

completed his trade and was returning home when he was taken by the press gang, forced into the English army, and sent to America. He was one of seven children, but he never saw any of his friends or relatives again. He was taken prisoner at the battle of Brandywine by the American troops and, finding out the merits of the cause for which they were struggling, enlisted in the colonial army and fought for them to the end of the war. Having adopted the new land as his own, he settled first in Pennsylvania, where he married. He moved to Ohio in 1812, settling in the same locality as my grandfather McLain.

"Both my father and mother were born in the year 1799, and they were married in 1820. They went to live on a piece of government land in Ripley County, Indiana, at that time in the very heart of the wilderness. My mother often related how badly frightened they were by being chased by a panther when moving to their new home. They lived on this farm for many years, but finally lost it through the dishonesty of one they had trusted as a friend; they then moved back to Hamilton County, Ohio. There my father became a farm tenant, and managed to live through the help of his children, who went out to work for others as soon as they were old enough to earn anything; and thus the large family was supported.

"As I have said, I was the youngest of twelve children. I was born March 15, 1842. My earliest recollections are of never-ending labor, self-denial, and hardship, associated with the conditions of poverty we necessarily endured. The routine was to arise at five o'clock in the morning the year round, and do the chores, such as feeding the stock, milking, and providing wood for the day, all before breakfast, which was at six. After breakfast we went to work again for ourselves or one of the neighbors. The hours were long ones; when occasion required we worked from twelve to fourteen hours a day, and felt it no hardship. We sometimes had a holiday, but not often. It must not be supposed that we children were less happy than others more favorably situated, or than children are now who live in luxury — we were healthy and strong and like lively young animals. Every spare moment was given

over to romping and play, and when those who were working for others gathered into the home Saturday night and sat down to the feast my mother always had prepared for us, I can think of no greater happiness than was enjoyed by our large family as we sat about the table and related the experiences of the week to each other.

"The country was still new, nearly half in forest, and we boys spent Sundays in the woods with our dogs, of which we always had two or three. We knew the habits of every wild animal and bird, the name of every tree and flower and bush. The enjoyment we had chasing rabbits and squirrels and hunting 'coon trees and woodchucks was fun enough for any boy, either then or now.

"There were no schools in our locality except for three months in the winter; and if there was work to be done then, which was generally true in our case, the children were kept at home to do it. Thus it came about that when I was eighteen years old I had not gone to school a year all together. Even with such a haphazard schooling I could read, but I could not write more than to sign my name in a very sprawling and awkward manner. When I was fifteen my father's health failed, so he could do nothing, and upon me, the youngest, devolved the entire support of my parents. The other children had either married and moved away or had drifted from home."

As I write these records of my brother-in-law I am the more surprised at what he accomplished. At eighteen he was practically without education, and when he came to us after the war he was not twenty-four, and he had a manly bearing and no appearance of any lack in education. His loyalty as a son proved a good foundation for our sister to trust in a husband. The way he went to work at eighteen to care for his parents he has briefly narrated. "I found a log cabin in which they could live rent free. We had a few chickens, and I was working for sixteen dollars a month and my board. I bought a cow and paid for her as I could out of my wages, a little at a time. There was a little garden spot in which my father and mother raised vegetables for their table, and in this way I supported my parents for



three years. They had enough to eat, but clothing was often quite scanty. As for myself I went barefoot in summer, wore blue jeans pants and what was then called a hickory shirt, manufactured from the coarsest cotton; my hat was straw: such was my meager outfit.

"My father died when I was eighteen, and my mother went to live with my eldest sister; and at last I started out to make my own way in the world. I had always wanted an education, and I resolved to get it. I began by hiring out to work for a man for eighteen dollars a month and board, and at the end of a time, after buying necessary clothing for myself and a few things for mother, I found I had sixty dollars left. With this as a reserve fund I made arrangements to attend a private boarding school conducted by Washington Oyler and wife near Harrison, Ohio. Mr. Oyler told me I would have to enter the children's class to begin with, which I agreed to do; but after further thought he suggested that he hear me privately until I could go into a more advanced class."

Brother Datus had a remarkable memory or he could never have done what he did in those days. As I write his reminiscences I can but think of our father, who worked to know under the greatest discouragement, and in his particular case with physical hindrances; I think, too, of my husband, who in a backwoods country had that same hunger for knowledge, and I am glad that, whether under poor, ordinary, or the best of circumstances, the people who have made up our family have desired education. Whether our father, with his magnifying glass and his Greek grammar and the disapprobation of his parents, or his great grandson, Joseph Ray Watkins, junior, carrying off four hundred dollars in prizes from Andover this June, and with every encouragement up the hill of knowledge, all have shown desire that strives to win in the field of learning.

To continue with our brother-in-law's reminiscences: "I entered into my studies with zest and worked night and day. I astonished my teacher by being able to recite dozens of pages of geography and grammar at one recitation, and in two months I was able to enter classes where the pupils were of my own age. At this time a good lady by the name of Clark, hearing



of the struggle I was making for an education, gave me the chance of living with her and earning my board by doing chores. She was a good woman and treated me as well as if I had been her own child. I owe her much. I went to school six months, and at the end of that time I had committed Pineo's Grammar to memory. There was hardly a question in it that I could not answer or a rule I could not recite, and yet I knew nothing about grammar — I could not apply it. The same was true of geography. I had mastered Ray's Arithmetic and was fairly good in figures, but my spelling and writing were very bad.

"At this time I had a brother living in the wilds of Indiana; a more benighted region did not exist, even in the imagination of Edward Eggleston. The inhabitants had erected a school-house in the neighborhood and employed a teacher, but the larger scholars had rebelled and driven him off, using sticks of stove-wood to impress him with the fact that they regarded him as an undesirable citizen. My brother wrote me all the facts and asked me if I thought that I could teach that school, and if so I could have it. The wages were thirty dollars per month, which to me was munificent.

"I accepted the situation and whipped five of the largest scholars the first day, including a girl sixteen years of age. I had no further trouble; what was needed was a policeman more than a teacher. I succeeded well and gave great satisfaction because I established perfect order. My ignorance was great, but nothing in comparison to theirs. My school terminated in the spring of 1862. I had made up my mind to continue my education, but the Civil War was in full swing and my patriotism got the better of my judgment; so I enlisted in the 83d Ohio Infantry for three years, at Camp Dennison, Ohio, August 25, 1862, and served my full term, to the end of the war. A few days after we were enlisted we were taken into Kentucky and helped chase Kirby Smith into Tennessee, following him nearly to the Cumberland Mountains. We were then marched back to Louisville and shipped upon boats to Memphis, where an army of thirty thousand men was organized to descend the Mississippi River and attack Vicksburg.

“We were loaded on board the boats at Memphis, December 19, 1862. Our regiment was packed upon a little boat by the name of *Citizen*. There were about nine hundred of us, and we literally swarmed all over the boat like flies. My company, Company D, with another company as well, occupied the hurricane deck of the boat. It was midwinter; we had no way of warming ourselves or of cooking our food. The weather was cold and rainy; we had no shelter whatever. The draught of wind on the river, partly from the moving boat, was cruel, and pierced us to the bone; our situation was pitiable in the extreme.

“We had large iron camp kettles in which to cook our food. We found that by getting ashes from the fire under the boilers of the boat and putting them in the bottom of a kettle, we could build a fire in it and boil coffee and fry salt pork. We were camped thus on the hurricane deck of this boat for thirty-three days, except when we landed to fight the enemy, which occupied about eight days of the time, and which I will describe later. To add to our discomfort, either because hard bread was not available or because they expected to land the army before they did, when it would be possible to bake bread,—whatever the reason, the result was that for the last two weeks on the boats they issued us flour which we had no means of baking, and which we could only eat, to keep from starving, by mixing it into dough and placing it on the boilers of the boat until it dried to a crust. We picked the crust off and ate it, and then dried the dough again.

“We had nothing but Mississippi water to drink, which was full of sediment. The result was that many soldiers died from sickness induced by our manner of food and living, and when we made a permanent landing at Young’s Point, opposite Vicksburg, there was scarcely a well man in the army. I mention this incident to show that fighting was not the most painful feature of army life in those days. But to return to the battles: As I said, we left Memphis on December 19th for Vicksburg. Christmas Day our brigade was landed at Milliken’s Bend and ordered to march back into the country twenty miles and destroy a portion of the Texas and Shreveport

Railroad, which we did with only a slight skirmish. We then returned to the boats and were carried to the rear of Vicksburg, to join the main army preparatory to the first great battle for the possession of Vicksburg. This took place December 29th.

"We attempted to storm the rebel forts on the Chickasaw Bluffs in the rear of Vicksburg. We were badly defeated; our loss was very heavy and we were driven back to our boats again. The rebels had a fort up the Arkansas River known as Arkansas Post; it was defended by about five thousand men. Our fleet immediately moved to that point, when the army surrounded the fort and, after a very bloody battle of three hours, captured it. The loss of our regiment in this fight, killed and wounded, was eighty-nine, or about one eighth of those present. We were then taken to Young's Point, across the river from Vicksburg, where we spent the winter.

"In April, 1863, we began our march down the west side of the river to get in the rear of Vicksburg. Our fleet of gunboats and transports ran the blockade of the Vicksburg batteries, and on the 10th of May we were carried across to the Vicksburg side of the river at Bruensburgh, about fifty miles below Vicksburg, and our brigade landed at perhaps four o'clock in the afternoon. We were then ordered to take six days' rations in our haversacks, which would hold but half that amount, so we threw away our clothing and filled the balance of our rations in our knapsacks. We commenced our march into the interior about five o'clock that night. We marched on until three o'clock in the morning, when we struck the rebel army. We lay down in line of battle until daylight, then fought the battle of Port Gibson, a battle which lasted all day. This was May 1, 1863.

"When we went into battle we were ordered to divest ourselves of our knapsacks, so we piled them up and went into the fight, and never saw them again. This left us with only the three days' rations in our haversacks. Nearly a month went by before regular rations were received again, and we lived off the country. It was not high, being a quart of corn meal daily, ground up cob and all, from which we made mush. We also had a little beef occasionally, which the cavalry drove

in from the surrounding country. We pushed on toward Vicksburg, and on May 16th fought the great battle of Champion Hills, which virtually decided the fate of Vicksburg.

"We were awakened about five o'clock in the morning of May 16th and ordered to cook our breakfasts and get ready for battle. I had nothing but some coffee which I had saved. I boiled about a pint of it and drank it down and set out on that march of eight miles, where the battle commenced about ten o'clock. We fought all that day, and my company stood battle picket all night. The enemy fell back during the night to Black River bridge, a distance of about eight miles, and as soon as it was daylight we marched that eight miles and fought the battle there, which lasted about two hours, all before we got anything to eat. We then had issued to us a pint of corn meal, ground up cob and all.

"On May 19th we drove the rebels into their fortifications at Vicksburg, and on May 22d we attempted to storm their works. This was the most desperate battle of the campaign up to that time. At daylight our army opened upon the rebel works with some one hundred and fifty pieces of artillery, and the rebels replied with about an equal number. This duel lasted until ten o'clock that morning, when our whole army of 30,000 men moved on the rebel fortifications, our artillery firing over our heads to confuse the rebel aim. The sight was most magnificent and imposing. We rushed to the assault with great impetuosity, knowing as we did that our greatest safety lay in getting into the works as soon as possible, having it over with rather than being shot down on the outside.

"Our division attempted to storm the fort on what was known as the Baldwin's Ferry Road. When we reached the fort we found it surrounded by a deep ditch we could not cross. We were compelled to remain there until about four o'clock, when we fell back to our old position. The rebel general, in making his official report, said that when the fight was over the field looked as though the Yankee dead lay so thick you might nearly step from one dead body to another over about an acre of ground. The siege lasted until almost the Fourth of July, with only desultory skirmishes.

“The surrender occurred upon the Fourth. In the different battles in the rear of Vicksburg, including the siege and surrender, our army lost, in killed, wounded, and missing, 8,575 men. The rebels lost, including the army surrendered, 46,470.”

How my mind flies back to that famous Fourth of July! We, far away on the frontier, were alive to the crisis through which our country was passing in sixty-three, and patriotism ran at flood tide. We felt convinced that success must come to the Union, and on this Fourth of July we decided that we must celebrate, in the hope that our country would yet be one. The towns of Fairhaven and Maine Prairie determined to have a picnic in one of the groves near the former place. We did not know what a decisive event was to occur upon that already great date, but we had a real celebration in spite of all our difficulties and troubles. The attendance was large. Ministers came out from St. Cloud, and a number of soldiers on furlough made an interesting assembly. Good, stirring music made the woods echo. How the soldier boys sang the national song so popular with them, and with us too — “We’ll rally round the flag, boys, we’ll rally once again” — I see the picture yet! The soldiers and some of the citizens stood upon the platform under the spreading branches of the oak trees, and our hearts rallied once again about the old flag as they sang. A few days later we read in the papers that on that same day, far south of us, Vicksburg was surrendering, and as the boys in blue ran “Old Glory” upon the court house of the beleaguered city they sang the same song: “We’ll rally round the flag, boys, we’ll rally once again, shouting the battle cry of freedom!” Far north and far south the battle cry of freedom was sounding, but the war was not over.

Datus writes of the day following: “On the 5th of July we moved out to attack Joseph E. Johnston, who had collected an army of about twenty thousand at Jackson, Mississippi. On the 12th of July we invested that city. The fighting was continuous until the 17th, when Johnston evacuated the place and fell back to Meridian, Mississippi. We did not follow, but returned to Vicksburg; and from there we were removed



by boat to New Orleans and composed a part of Banks' second Red River expedition.

"Banks was perhaps the most incompetent general in the Union army. After marching his army nearly to the Red River from New Orleans, he became alarmed at the maneuvers of the rebel army under Dick Taylor, though no stronger than his own, and turned about and fled. Our brigade, on account of its experience in fighting, was made rear guard. We skirmished all day with the rebel cavalry; at night we camped in a strip of timber along Bayou Grand Coteau. The main rebel army, 6,000 strong, camped within two miles of us. Banks with his main army fell back and went into camp six miles in our rear. Our brigade was composed of four regiments and two light batteries, but 1,100 in all. We were every one experienced veterans and knew that, with Banks and his army six miles away and the rebel army within two miles, we were doomed to destruction. The rebels attacked us next day about eleven o'clock; they massed all their infantry and threw it against our front, while their cavalry charged our flank. Three of our regiments were crumpled up and either killed, wounded, or taken prisoners. My regiment, the 83d Ohio, fought its way into the woods near by, where the cavalry could not form to charge *en masse*. The fragments of the other regiments gathered to us. The color-bearer of the 23d Wisconsin with his color guard fought his way out of the mix-up in which his regiment was destroyed and attached himself to our regiment.

"At the opening of the battle our color-bearer was visiting a picket post in front and was taken prisoner by the rebel cavalry before he could get back to the regiment. I picked up our colors and carried them through the fight. The color-bearer of the 23d Wisconsin was shot by my side, and his colors fell to the ground. I picked them up and carried them under my arm while I kept my own flying, so I had the honor of saving both my own colors and the colors of the 23d Wisconsin. For this I was honored by a furlough home with my color guard. Out of 1,100 of us who went into the fight, only 300 came out! Out of the 1,050 men with which my regiment



entered the service, there were after this fight only about 150 left, and we were consolidated with the 48th Ohio; then the two regiments combined were less than 400 men.

"During the attack on Jackson our skirmishers had captured a house and cistern. In looking down into the cistern for water, we discovered a rebel in there, and also a lot of clothing. The clothes we had on had not been changed for six weeks and were ragged and filthy. A short ladder had been put down for the man's use. We captured him and sent him back to our army, and I climbed into the cistern to investigate; on finding the clothing I hastily changed, and just then the cry came: "The rebels are coming! The rebels are coming!" In my haste to get out I left my blouse in the cistern, which was no great loss in itself, save that there were in the pocket all my letters and a picture. That evening the skirmishers of the 23d Wisconsin recaptured the cistern. Among them it so happened there was a man by the name of Myers who found the blouse with the letters and picture in it, and he brought them back to me the next day."

It is this picture I have to present to you — the picture of my little sister in that long ago. Brother Datus goes on to relate his further experiences down South:

"We were then moved with our division to Florida, to operate with the army against Mobile. This army was concentrated about Mobile Bay, and so our regiment had the honor of participating in the last great battle of the war, storming the works at Blakely, across the bay from Mobile, April 9, 1865 — after Lincoln had been assassinated and Lee had surrendered. The works we had to attack were about two miles long; a regiment from each division was selected to lead the charge and develop the enemy's strength, a sort of forlorn hope. It was not dreamed that we could capture the fort in our front without the support of the balance of the division.

"I will give you here a description of the part our 83d Ohio played in this fight. The account is written by Gen. C. C. Andrews, in his 'History of the Mobile Campaign': 'The 83d Ohio had three ravines to pass, and the ravine nearest the

garrison was deep and so long as to include nearly the whole of the regiment. When it had advanced about 200 yards it had come to the principal line of Confederate rifle-pits, still to some extent unoccupied. The 83d here paused a few moments for the right to get up out of the ravine; the Confederate sharpshooters' guns were taken from those who surrendered, and broken. The colors of the 83d moved on, the line still advancing as fast as the nature of the ground and the obstacles of brush and logs would admit. It soon began to descend the ravine 200 yards from the main works, and for two or three long minutes was lost sight of. It was passing the ravine, through which ran a rivulet and in the bottom of which was a jungle of slashings almost defying the passage of persons even at a time of leisure and unencumbered with weapons. Then it began to ascend the high ground in front of the redoubt, where were some detached rifle-pits. A few steps farther and it was up to another line of abatis, breast high, apparently impassable, and fifty yards from the works. Before this the foremost of the 83d stooped down to avoid the destructive fire which was being poured upon them, to take breath, and to wait till the wings could close up. Fifteen yards inside the line of abatis just before them was another line, not readily seen at a distance, consisting of stakes firmly driven into the ground close together and sharpened at the end. Then thirty-five yards from that were the ditch and the high parapet of the redoubt. It was about twenty minutes from the time the 83d began the charge till it was in possession of the works; but some contest was kept up for a few minutes in the rear of the redoubt after the first had entered. Two volleys were fired inside the works, in the edge of the woods, five minutes after the 83d was inside.'

"I will now tell of my own part in this fight. When we were ordered forward to charge the fort we made a rush for it with the greatest enthusiasm. The old soldier knows that the sooner he closes with his enemy the better. We fought our way through all the obstructions until we came to the last abatis of sharpened sticks placed in the ground pointing toward us at a sharp angle and about waist high. They had

placed a wire in front of this abatis to trip us up and throw us on the stakes. I was a little in front of my comrades, and was thrown to the ground with such force that the blood gushed out of my nose; but I missed the stakes. Two of my comrades thought I was shot and raised me up. When I got to my feet I was crazy mad. I started for the fort and ran against the sharpened stakes, one of which penetrated my clothes and came near entering my stomach. I tore that stake out of the ground and my squad passed through the opening to the fort. A minute later our whole regiment was swarming into the fort. I do not know that I was the first to enter the fort, but I do know I was one of the first. The colonel commanding the fort fled back to the boat landing with many of his men, we in pursuit, and he surrendered to me."

While this story is told without flourish of trumpets, it is one to make us proud; and it will be easily imagined what very interesting letters came from "'way down South" to our far northern home through those years of history. Our sister became engaged to her soldier boy during the time he was proving himself under hard and critical conditions to be a man of stamina and bravery, and those letters from Louisiana to Minnesota were real events in our lives.

One of the later ways which relieved the tedium of winter on Maine Prairie was the organization of a lyceum by the neighbors. They kept up regular meetings, with an occasional lecture from one of the most gifted of their number, or they would call in talent from St. Cloud. With debates, essays, and theatricals the time passed more swiftly. Among the members were Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Atwood. They were young people with a family of little boys. They were but two in those days, Clarence and Harry. They lived at one side of Pearl Lake, and when the lake was frozen over we could cross back and forth on the ice. Mrs. Atwood was a bright and vivacious young woman, who took part in the literary program of the lyceum and was a star actress in the theatricals. Mr. Atwood was very appreciative of anything good in the programs. We did not know then that these old neighbors were

to become connected with our sister's family, but so it was to be.

Her youngest was indeed the comfort of her age, just as our mother had foretold. I am glad she was with our mother to the very last, but I have envied her the sweet pain. We returned to Ohio in 1868, and my husband began to have regular pastorates; we remained in southern Ohio for over six years, and our two children were born there. In Minnesota the winter of 1870 had been a long, cold time; much deep snow fell. The season was hard in more ways than one, as smallpox entered the home at Pearl Lake Place and became epidemic, as upon its first appearance it was not recognized and so it spread. By the beginning of winter it had become a sore affliction in the country. One of the neighbors lost a son from the disease. Our entire family living at Pearl Lake contracted the disease, one after the other, in form more or less severe. Our parents had it in the mildest form. The entire winter was spent in caring for the sick and fumigating the house between the attacks upon the different members of the family.

Spring approached and our people were once more resuming their ordinary routine, when mother took ill with a pain in her head, thought at first to be a cold. During the early stage of her disease father had a dream one night that occurred to him as being so peculiar that before he came to full consciousness he gave to his unusual dream an interpretation. The dream was like this: He was seated in a small, self-propelling handcart, and as the cart moved along the front wheels gave way, and he suddenly found himself stranded. "Ah," thought he, "I know this is but a dream, but its meaning is this: I am to lose my wife!" The dream so deeply impressed him that he could think of but little else. Mother noticed his sad face and guessed the reason of his depression. Dear soul as she was, she sought to relieve his fears by telling him that she had been sicker many times during her life, and that her present illness had been of short duration.

As the days went by and no improvement came in her condition, a physician was called. Brother Datus had to walk

the fourteen miles to St. Cloud through the deep snow to get the doctor, who proved to be a Catholic priest. When he heard the description of our mother's symptoms he pronounced her disease dropsy of the brain, an incurable sickness. She would lie in an unconscious state for hours, and then at intervals complain of a dreadful pain in her head. Hearing returned to the ear made deaf by scarlet fever, and that sense became so acute that she could hear the slightest sound.

During her delirium she would break forth in strains of eloquence, and in most sublime diction would speak the praises of the great Creator. Never for one moment did she forget her harp was tuned to sacred melody, nor did she once utter light word or jest. As the end drew near, she called father and Ida and Datus to her side and sent last messages of love to her absent children. Brother William as well as I was in Ohio; Joseph was in Plainview, just establishing himself in business. These were her last words: "Do all diligence to meet me in Heaven;" and she added that she loved us all to the last.

How deep was the snow and how impassable the roads on that sad day will appear when I state that the drifts began to break down and traffic was pronounced impossible. Once more our neighbor, Thomas Stanley, came to our assistance. At one time he had been an undertaker, and he made in his own little shop a casket for our precious mother's remains. All through her illness of three weeks, those kind neighbors on the prairie had done all possible to help. They made the grave near the garden on the farm — a place she and father had once selected for their last resting place. There she lay for more than thirty years, when Brother Joseph had the remains removed to his burial place in Winona.

Time began to drag heavily with our dear father, as it had never done before. Always he had found solace and pleasant occupation in the study of his beloved books, especially the devotional and critical study of the Bible; but how sad and lonely he was after mother's death will appear in this poem written by him in 1870:



## ALONE, BUT NOT ALONE

I am alone! My angel wife,  
Whose eyes were guiding stars to mine,  
Hath left this lowly vale of life  
And gone where brighter glories shine:  
Where brighter skies and holier light  
Brood o'er the gemmed and flow'ry plain,  
Where all is joy and health and might,  
And happy spirits meet again!

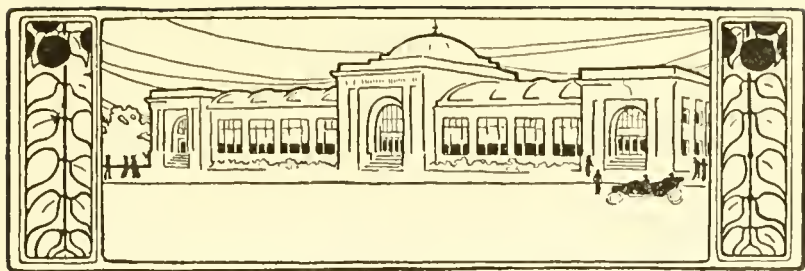
I am alone! How can I stay  
In this cold-hearted world of care?  
With that bright jewel far away  
I weep and pray with bitter prayer,  
With aching heart and swimming brain,  
With anguished nerves and welling eyes —  
To never meet with her again,  
Beneath these empyrean skies!

Am I alone when spirits bright,  
Called angels in the better land,  
Attend my path by day, by night,  
Around my sleeping pillow stand?  
I almost feel their gentle touch,  
I almost catch their voices' tone —  
While my companionship is such  
How can I ever feel alone?

I'm not alone, for God hath said:  
I'll never thee forsake nor leave!  
Why am I then so much dismayed?  
Why should my heart thus sorely grieve?  
I'll dry these bitter, scalding tears,  
And thank Him for His chastening rod —  
In Death's dark vale dismiss all fears:  
I'm not alone — I walk with God.

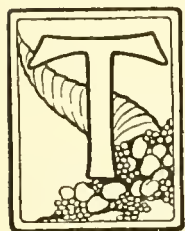
When we consider the events which occurred in our sister's life at Pearl Lake, it is small wonder that it became a dear place to her. There she was married; there she cared for our mother; there, too, were born her two dear elder daughters, who still live to bless and comfort her. There were just two scenes of

the life of the parental home for us, two settings that we shall always see as they used to be. They are changed now and do not belong to us; we do not even think of them as they are at the present time. The first home, Walnut Tree Place in Ohio, and the last, Pearl Lake Place in Minnesota, are enshrined in our memories as they were of old — our own to live and die with us.



## CHAPTER XV

JOSEPH RAY WATKINS



HIS story, I feel, should be clearly drawn, with particulars illustrating how we are led in ways we know not, for as our father used to say, "I see the hand of Providence." In beginning this story of Brother Joseph's youth I will state that more than fifty years ago, when emigrants were coming from Ohio and Indiana to Minnesota, a family came from Cadiz, Ohio, by the name of Snyder. Minnesota in those days assumed to be a health resort, and so it was when contrasted with the low marsh lands of Ohio and Indiana. The recommendation of its healthful climate brought a young man by the name of William Fox from his old home in Cadiz. He was broken down in health and needed a change of air, so his parents wrote asking the advice of their old friends, the Snyders, as to the climate of Minnesota. Testimonials are always plentiful, and the old neighbors thought it would be a fine thing for "Will" to come north, which he did about 1863 or 1864.

It so happened that Mr. Frost was doing evangelistic work in the vicinity of Hoka, Minnesota, where the Snyders lived, and there he met William Fox. The young man was eager to travel and see the new country, and as Mr. Frost had a good horse and buggy he asked Mr. Fox to accompany him on his tour. Together they studied the route, which was northward

to Stearns County. This was just what Mr. Fox wanted to do, for he was fond of hunting and fishing; and as small game and fish were plentiful in the Maine Prairie country it was just the place he would enjoy, and so they started north for father's. On their way from Hoka they stopped at Morristown, where Mr. Frost and I were then living. Mr. Fox did not look like an invalid; he was a fine specimen of well-developed manhood, just tall enough and well-proportioned. He had dark hair and large, expressive gray eyes, with a clear complexion — indeed he was a superior looking young man, cultured and refined. His family were Quakers (Hicksite). In those days there was a large settlement of these people about Cadiz.

It was summertime when they took their trip to Maine Prairie, and their journey was a long, hard one through dust and heat; and when they came in sight of Pearl Lake Place I think it must have looked refreshing. Looking across the sandbar they could see the entire shimmering surface of the lake, with its dark and shady border of native forest. It has ever been regarded as one of the most charming of lakes, and the newcomer could not but admire its ever changing beauty; Mr. Fox felt that here he had found the place to get well. Our people were pleased with this addition to the household, and they, too, encouraged him with praise of the health-giving air of northern Minnesota. Soon the young man became a part of the family, and he and Brother Joe were friends. They would go out on the lake together and anchor their boat in a particular spot we had named "Pike County," from the school of pike which congregated there. What sport it was to fish in that place! It was simply fun to throw out a hook and bring in such splendid results; in less than an hour we would have all the fish we could use for several days.

While Mr. Fox did not look the invalid he was weak. When he first came he could not walk after game, but he was gifted with the true sportsman's patience. He would go down into the woods with his gun and take a seat on a stump in some retired nook and *wait* for rabbits, squirrels, pheasants or prairie chickens to chance his way. He often brought home trophies from this sedentary method of hunting, and always

gave his game into mother's hands, having dressed it in the most perfect manner. He was the personification of neatness in all ways; he seemed to belong to the wealthy farmer class, but was not at all extravagant.

During the summer he and Brother Joe became the best of friends, as they were congenial and had fine sport together. When it came time for William Fox to return to Ohio he had arranged with our brother to visit him; and as his section of the country was noted for its superior fruit, Joe thought that something might be made by shipping dried fruit to Minnesota. We had missed fruit so much; the trees the first settlers planted were yielding scarcely any return, nor were the kinds best adapted to the climate yet known. We had but a little of the small fruits cultivated, and there were only wild crabapples and plums besides; indeed we did not know that large apples would grow in Minnesota. We had grown very fruit hungry, and it was decided that Brother Joe should spend the most of the winter in Cadiz with his friend, and bring back quantities of dried apples and peaches. We had few ways of preserving fruit in those days, some fifty years ago.

Joseph visited us at Plainview on his way to Ohio, and I remember yet how he looked, and even the clothes that he wore. Mother had made him a suit of gray tweed, which a tailor had cut but she had sewed and finished with her own skillful fingers and then pressed to perfect smoothness. This brother of ours had a trim, neat figure, and he certainly did look fine in the new suit. He had a beautifully white skin, and his deeply set dark eyes were clear and bright; they were a pleasing combination with sandy hair. It was after Christmas that our brother fared forth in all the hope and brightness of youth to meet his fate.

Mr. Fox's people were so pleased with the outcome of their son's visit and the restoration of his health that they tried in every way to make our brother's visit in their home a pleasant episode in his life. The young people in that section were well informed and interested in education. They had a literary society for mutual culture, with a critic appointed. Among these young people is one I wish to introduce here, for



she was to become one of our own circle and bear the Watkins name. Mary Ellen Heberling was the only daughter of well-to-do parents, a bright, vivacious girl of twenty-three, who always did her part in making a company lively. She had several brothers, who were very fond of their one sister and took pride in her bright social gifts.

Upon Brother Joe's return from Ohio there was a brisk correspondence between Cadiz and Maine Prairie, and after a while, though not at once, we knew that our deliberate and cautious brother had found the girl of his choice; and he had the fortune to win her, as they became engaged later. In the early autumn of 1868 he went back to the Heberling home in Cadiz, and on September 10, 1868, he was married to Mary Ellen Heberling and brought her as a bride to Minnesota.

Mr. Frost and I were in Ohio at this time, nor were we at home when Brother Joe introduced his young wife to the family, but I heard how well pleased they were. Father wrote me how bright and cheery she was, and of her ringing laugh at his anecdotes, of which he had a varied store for almost any occasion. Mother wrote, too, of the new daughter's kind and helpful ways, and that she was well pleased with Joe's choice. It must have meant much to her parents and brothers to see this sparkling young member of their family go out from the home and far away to a new country to reside. I think they must have had confidence in our brother, and he was true to the trust.

The same year in which he married he bought the right to compound and manufacture Dr. Ward's Vegetable Anodyne Liniment from Dr. Ward himself, who was an old friend of the family. His home was in Harrison, Ohio, and they had met him there. We had used this excellent remedy for years while Dr. Ward was in the business, and well knew both the efficacy and popularity of the medicine; it was afterward known as Watkins' Liniment. It was only after brother had looked on all sides of the enterprise that he decided to undertake it and start out on his own account, whereupon he had a wagon made in St. Cloud. It was just a long, covered box with compartments and a high seat in front. I think the entire outfit, horses and all, cost five hundred dollars. His first territory



Joseph Ray Watkins



Mary Ellen Watkins



comprised Minnesota and Wisconsin; and when he had purchased his wagon he was ready to start out, for he had his first supply of medicine made and bottled.

Mother and Ida were looking out for the return of Joe and Datus, who had gone together to St. Cloud to bring home the new wagon; indeed, in the beginning the two were partners. While mother and sister were at the front windows watching, they suddenly discovered the horses and wagon at the gate. They were somewhat startled to see how like a hearse it looked! It was painted a very dark green, and that gave it a funereal appearance; but ultimately the box was repainted brown, which was decided to be less dismal a color. The whole business finally was left in Brother Joseph's hands, after a year or so of joint ownership. I have the first account book of the J. R. Watkins Medical Company; having later been used as a scrapbook, it came to me in its latter capacity from our father. It still testifies to the business-like habits of our younger brother, and the limited beginnings of a young man who was to enlarge his first undertaking to a great and prosperous business. It was with this one wagon he began his long and successful career as the builder of a large fortune. While pre-eminently conservative, he had the wisdom and foresight to formulate plans to bring about a conspicuous success. As I review our family after the years have told their story, I am glad to note the variety there has been in their characteristics, and that they have woven these into their lives to make them true and useful and crowned with a measure of the things most desired by the individual.

It was seven years after my brother Joseph's marriage before I saw my sister, Mary Ellen. When my husband and I returned to Minnesota to live again for a time, they had moved to Plainview and bought property. On one corner of their lot was a modest little laboratory, where my brother did business and compounded his remedies, making perhaps two barrels of liniment at a time. I found them in a pleasant little home of their own in the small country town.

We came in at an unexpected hour, and Mary was out calling; but when we had taken off our things and I had placed my baby boy Willie on the floor, she came in and I recall very

clearly my first impression of her, and even how she looked. She was dressed in a new chambray gingham, pink trimmed with white, and a broad-brimmed white hat with a wreath of pink roses under the brim rested on her dark hair. This simple but dainty and becoming dress heightened the beauty of her lustrous black eyes and hair. A characteristic or a gift that was noticeably hers impressed me then as it did many times afterward — her cheerful and musical voice in conversation. She had a most pleasant manner, and my heart grows tender as I look back thirty-seven changing years and remember Sister Mary Ellen's bright young womanhood. Those who knew her best always loved her best. In the first days of her married life Sister Ida and she lived in the same house, and they were devoted friends; familiar association but drew them together. In writing of her I wish there was some way to gather the words some of the lowly have said of her, or the opinions of struggling young men whom she has encouraged by her thoughtful kindness. Her words and favors are yet remembered gratefully.

To go back those thirty-five years and more, I must tell how carefully as well as prettily she was dressed with well-fitting shoes and gloves, little points my woman's eyes noted with admiration. She had in her hands a silk sunshade, and while she talked with me of my children she toyed with this pretty sunshade. A pleasing picture for memory is that summertime scene. They had no children then; her time was spent in keeping her home beautifully neat and in reading, of which she was very fond. I visited that pleasant home in Plainview only at long intervals, but it is a satisfaction to me to testify my admiration for this sister; she was economical and a most capable housekeeper.

After nine years without the voices of children in that home, their daughter Grace was born. It was a glad day for each of our family when we heard that a little one, perfect and promising in every way, was a part of our family circle in the home of Brother Joseph. The entire home felt the influence of her young life and watched with delight her growth and development. She and her little brother, born two years later, were the youngest of the grandchildren of our parents.



When Grace was born we were living at Pleasant Grove, Minnesota, about forty miles from Plainview, and we drove over to see the baby. It was a pleasant journey with a good team of horses on a day in spring, and we found the little dark-eyed baby all that could be desired. As I looked at her in her mother's arms I did not dream she was to be the one to suggest to me the writing of our annals and to make this very book a possibility. She was certainly a beam of bright sunshine in her home. The muslin tent on the lawn, her playhouse when she was a child, her dolls and her dishes and her little friends to dine with her,—these are only memories now, but they tell of a happy little girl who was a bright playmate for those she selected as her friends, and from the very beginning she was loyal to such. By her orders the muslin tent of which I have spoken was erected upon the lawn, and there only her special friends were entertained; for, like her mother, she preferred to chose her own friends, and to them she would be constant.

Mary Ellen loved flowers, and I can yet see how she used to visit her garden after the sun had set on summer days and note the new varieties or fresh blossoms that had opened during the day. Years afterward she told me of the happiness she had felt when with her babies in that little garden at the back of the house, little Georgie B. in her arms and Grace clinging to her skirts. She recalled how sweet it was to pass between the rows of blooming plants, with the evening air full of fragrance and her babies seeming to enjoy all with her. How full of life and hope we all were then!

Sad indeed was that day, February 25, 1881, when Georgie B. straightened himself out in his father's arms in a spasm, and passed from one convulsion to another till his little bruised form grew still in death. He was named for his two grand-fathers, George Benjamin, and he was but fourteen months old when he died. His birthday was just the day after Christmas in 1879. I have in the house, after thirty-one years, a letter from our father's second wife, telling of the sorrowful time of his death, of the newly fallen snow that came so heavily and so rapidly that it blocked the railroad so they had difficulty in reaching Plainview from a point not far distant.

I remember the two little graves on the south side of the Plainview Cemetery, little green mounds in the springtime, where an unnamed infant's and Georgie B.'s bodies lie. Not far away in that same cemetery is the grave of our first-born, where the snows of forty-six winters and the grass of as many springs have spread their curtains.

If I should trace the history of our brother's friends from first to last, friends who were chosen intimates, the list would not be long. To few he gave utter confidence, though naturally of an unsuspecting nature. He gave of himself to those he chose, and the gift was no mean one. Among the real friends of his youth there still remains Dr. D. A. Stewart, who came into his life in his early Plainview days and remained a close friend through all his life. Dr. Stewart has told us of his first knowledge of Brother Joseph's business. Of the forerunner of his 2,500 Watkins wagons he says: "The first of his Plainview carts, which he drove himself, was a miscegenation between a wagon and a buggy, drawn by one small horse." Dr. Stewart could scarcely say enough about what he called "a miracle-like evolution" of a business. About ten years ago Brother Joseph showed the doctor his plant and explained the development of present methods, and then he said: "I never dreamed of being a rich man!" Certainly it is a great plan well carried out that would increase in less than half a century a modest competence to an income from sales in 1911 of several million dollars. We mention this growth here simply to illustrate the fact that he showed his mental endowment by his evolving sound business methods that worked with a great degree of perfection. Conservative he was, and not fond of daring; he ever experimented carefully, and quietly set in motion what he felt was worthy of success. One of his last letters — probably his last to his coworkers — is contained in the weekly "Roll of Honor" published by his company in Winona, Minnesota. Whatever the success of the business now or in the future, we must know that it is due to the foundation laid by our brother.

Under the caption "The President's Message," it says:

FELLOW WORKERS: I started this business on January 1, 1868, and have been on the job ever since. I don't know it all yet, and I



Grace Eleanor Watkins



George Benjamin Watkins



didn't learn what I do know all at once. It was a growth. The idea was properly conceived, it germinated, it bore fruit. I knew I had a good thing in Watkins' Liniment. At first I tried to sell it to the trade. I soon learned that a man's competitors are not the people to market his goods for him. Whenever possible, the druggists substituted their own remedies where mine were called for. They knocked me all they could. Instead of prospering with the growing prosperity of the country, I got poorer and poorer. Then it was I awoke to the fact that I could afford to take my goods to the consumer. I decided that I would no longer trust my competitors to push my goods for me. I realized that the majority of people are honest; that most of them will pay their bills. I hired agents for wages to carry the goods to the consumer. That system, although an improvement on selling through competitors, was not entirely satisfactory work. The present plan was gradually evolved, and we have stuck to it ever since, and have built up much the largest business of the kind in the world.

If there are those who imagine I am in business solely for the money there is in it, they are sadly mistaken. This business is, and always has been, my pride and my joy. Beside it all other interests pale into insignificance. I am at my desk every day, opening mail, looking over orders and reports; and nothing does me more good than to keep in touch with all departments by frequent visits to every part of our immense plant.

I have been a salesman myself, and I know what salemen have to contend with. I therefore feel that my long experience in business and in everyday life qualifies me to give advice and suggestions, to sympathize with you in your troubles, to participate in your successes, and to share in your triumphs.

The returns for Record-Busting Week have been a source of the greatest gratification and the liveliest satisfaction to me. I particularly appreciate and heartily commend the earnest united effort on the part of so many hundreds of our salesmen to show what could be done in six full days' work on the road. I am sure the results are just as gratifying to the men who have done this excellent work as they are to me. This week marks a new era in the medicine business, and I trust the publication of the facts may be the means of attracting the attention of hundreds of other first-class men, who may in time be converted to the Watkins Way.

With the assurances of my kindest personal regard and highest appreciation of your loyalty and co-operation, I am,

Sincerely yours,

*J. R. Watkins*

*Pres. The J. R. Watkins Medical Co.*





## CHAPTER XVI

### TALES OF THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN



OUR father had fine conversational ability and brought much to the circle of his home. On returning from a long absence he would be met with eager joy, and he ever had something of interest to tell. With what attention we listened to the narrative of his adventures while gone and to the new stories he had to tell and anecdotes he had heard. Just as soon as dinner was over on the day of his return, we would hasten to get the work done up so as to join father and the boys about our log heap fire, and then how we listened!

The tedium of our more quiet lives was thus broken, and we caught a vision of the world outside that was inspiring. The chief stories and anecdotes that struck us in that long-ago time are still related and recalled by the survivors of our family. A few years ago Brother Joseph collected a few of these stories in a little book called "Tales of the Tribe of Benjamin," which we feel deserve a place in these annals.

While fiction was not looked upon then with the favor it receives now, when the new book entitled "Uncle Tom's Cabin" appeared it did reach our circle. I believe it was the first long story ever read in our house, and so eager were we all to hear this great story of Harriet Beecher Stowe that father read it aloud to us.

The demand was so great for this popular work that the book was turned from the press with paper covers and came out in two volumes. We could not work fast enough to get ready to assemble in the living room to listen to the wonderful story. Imagine reading it in the very times of slavery, in those historic ante-bellum days. Especially toward the last did we shed sympathetic tears, and it was often difficult for our father to control his voice as he read. There were no dramatic productions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in those days, but I think our imaginations were quite vivid enough, and perhaps our fancy pictured the departure of little Eva for heaven more beautifully than any stage portrays.

The tales from Brother Joseph's print shop are as follows:

#### THE TALE OF A PROTESTANT COW

Once upon a time a son of Erin bought a cow of a neighbor who entertained a certain faith which was an abomination to a devout Catholic, as he was, and when the cow was brought home to the Irish family the old lady and all her young ones came out into the barnyard to take a look at the "Protestant cow," as they called her. The old lady expressed her fears that the animal might be possessed of the devil and be the cause of much bad luck; but a happy thought struck her, namely, that if the cow were sprinkled with holy water the evil spirit would be cast out. She therefore sent one of the children into the house for the "howly water," but the child got instead the bottle of oil of vitriol. Pat held the cow by the horns and the woman proceeded to sprinkle on the vitriol. When the cow began to rear and plunge she shouted: "Hould on tight, Pat, the Protestant is strong in her yet!"

#### A THIEF IN A MILL

Once upon a time in the days of old, an Irish miller and his family lived, as was the custom in those days, in the mill. They had a toll dish in which their portion of the wheat was placed. The rule was that the dish should be taken "struck measure," but their habit was to heap the toll dish, and meanwhile they grew old and rich. The day came when their con-

sciences waxed tender, and one evening as the old pair sat by the fireside smoking their respective pipes, they began to discuss in just what way they should make restitution. At that late day the question was: How can we restore the garnered measure to the scattered patrons of the mill? Suddenly the old wife hit upon a plan of restoration. They would invest their ill-gotten gains in a saloon, a certain magnet for all their scattered customers. The glass would tempt them all to enter their saloon door, and once enticed, said glass should be so short that the bibulous could not fall into the sin of intemperance; in that way perfect restitution could be made for the extra toll those same customers had paid. Short measure of whisky given would atone for overmeasure of wheat taken.

#### A CURE FOR DELIRIUM TREMENS

Father was a Christian preacher, and Saturday evenings were devoted to study. One dark, windy night as he sat in the front room with a blazing fire, the family all having gone aloft to their rooms, he heard a call from the front gate, to which he responded and in his usual hospitable way invited the stranger in. To our surprise the traveler carried a small candle in his hand, which he had to protect from the wind. He seemed much excited, and told father that a horse kept running before him all the way down Brown's hill. Father gave him a room and proceeded with his study and writing. Directly he heard a call from the room, and on inquiry found his guest in great distress, telling father that two calves were sowing sulphur over his bed and besought him to smell the clothes and detect if there were not sulphur in them. Father told him he could neither see nor smell anything out of the ordinary. The man became quiet again and father resumed his work, but soon the call came again — this time the stranger was having difficulty with two devils sitting on the head-board sprinkling him with sulphur. At last father thought of a familiar herb in the family pharmacopœia — lobelia! The dried herbs were taken from the closet, the teakettle placed on the crane over the fire, and soon the decoction was made and administered.

It was after midnight before the unfortunate, besotted man got relief, but the devils were cast out by the powerful exorcism of lobelia. Some days later we found he was a farm hand on Neighbor Brown's place, and Mrs. Brown had become so frightened she had turned him out.

He left our house in the morning after breakfast, making apology for his strange conduct by saying he thought the cause was homesickness!

#### A MAN AND A HOG

A workman once threw out pomace from the cider mill near the stamping-ground of a drove of hogs. The heat of the sun soon did its work and charged the pomace with alcohol; the pigs devoured it and became gay, racing around the orchard three times at full speed. Then they waited till the next day, when they repeated their booze, continuing to revel through the season. Only a man and a hog get drunk the second time.

#### THE SUPERSTITIOUS HOG

A farmer had a cornfield rescued from the wilderness but still bordering on a woodland. One day an old tree fell across the rail fence of the cornfield, crushing it down but at the same time stopping up the opening its fall made in the fence. This tree was hollow and bowed, one end lay in the forest and one in the cornfield. Devastations by some unknown enemy soon began to be apparent. The intruder was Mr. Wild Hog, but he was never once seen in the woodland nor feasting in the cornfield. The mystery of how he got in continued till one moonlight night the farmer hid near the fence and watched. At last through the shadowy wood came Mr. Wild Hog and wriggled into the forest end of the hollow tree, coming out into the cornfield to break his fast. The farmer kept quiet until the pig left the field, and then a brilliant idea struck him. He turned the bowed log so that it still blocked the opening in the fence, but both ends opened into the forest. Mr. Wild Hog kept shady till the next night, when he dashed into his subway and lo, he came out into the forest; back again, and presto! the wilderness. A third time, and the wildwood lay

before him. His frightened "Whuff-f!" smote the air as he struck off for the pathless forest, never more to be seen in that vicinity.

### "SOME BIG WOR-RDS"

A farmer had an Irish work hand on his place who solicited his assistance in writing to the old country. The farmer asked him what he should write. He replied, "Write most anything, but be shure to put in some big wor-rds like Con-stan-ti-nople!"

### THE PROSPECT OF GOING TO WAR

New Jersey was one of the stamping-grounds of the Revolution. The invasion had not yet reached southern New Jersey when a citizen of that part heard of the landing of British troops at a northern port of his colony. He felt very brave and warlike, and marched forth with his matchlock, which he fired into empty space, roaring at the same time, "Take that! That's the way I'll fix you fellers when you come down here!" As news of the progress southward of the British came, the courage of the patriotic citizen began to fizzle, and as their approach was imminent he got "cold feet" and rushed off to the Quakers to apply for membership in their society, so well known for their refusal to go to war from principle.

The Quaker elder interrogated him as to his fitness to become a member of their peaceful association, and finally said: "We heard thee shot at the British," which proved to be a stumper to the candidate, who stammered out, "I no hurt anybody."

### AN ALLEGORY

I was plowing for Haudie Bennett, and next me was a strip of recently burnt prairie where I spied a lonesome prairie hen standing with her head erect and evidently expecting company. Soon along came a prairie rooster sailing through the air with outspread wings and lit down beside her. He began demonstrating the beauty of his feathers. He strutted and crowed and cooed, showing her what a fine boy he was. He did his best, with fine circumlocution, while the prairie hen stood demurely there pretending not to see him, taking no notice of



him till he was done strutting and fussing and cooing; and then she took her part, and began berating and scolding him in a tongue unknown to me — she flouted him, turned her back upon him and walked away from him. Whereupon he arose upon indignant pinions and whir-r-r! he flew to a far distance, probably telling her there were better-looking hens than she all over the prairie, and right where he was going in particular. And then what lonely grieving and wailing came from that little prairie hen, away off there by her poor lonesome self!

*Moral:* All nature, one nature; all life, one life; all love, one love.

#### DAVY ROBINSON

I knew a man with a large family, who lived by his daily labor; he was always light-hearted, and never complained of trouble or hard times. When asked how he was getting on and how he lived, he would reply, "On short cake, but the only trouble is that the cake is too short for me to get a hand on it." He would generally add, "and for variety we sometimes have a leg o' nothing and no turnips." It was something to watch Davy eat one of mother's boiled dinners, the slices of pork and real cabbage proving better by far than the famous repast of "Leg o' nothing and no turnips."

#### "YOU'RE WHAT JIM WROTE!"

Jim Lane, the hired man, became mad at a neighbor and wrote him an abusive letter, calling him hard names, such as "devil." Mother had taught us this was wrong, and one day, when being tormented by his brother, in a fit of great exasperation little Joe said to Will: "You're what Jim wrote!"

#### POETICAL GIFTS

Our father was something of a poet; he loved Minnesota and wrote "Autumnal Days" in that state.

Autumnal days, autumnal days,  
There's beauty in thy mist and haze —

Datus Myers, his son-in-law, parodied this in a manner to advertise the celebrated Egyptian Salve:



Egyptian Salve, Egyptian Salve,  
 A stick the people all should have.  
 A strengthening plaster well applied  
 Will cure a pain in back or side!

So much for the "Watkins Way."

Joseph II writes of his father, B. U. Watkins:

My father was a preacher bold,  
 Down by the shady Mill Creek;  
 In Latin and Greek the old story he told,  
 Down by the shady Mill Creek.  
 He preached without pay and he paid without kick,  
 To fix up the church so stylish and sleek,  
 Down by the shady Mill Creek.

It seems there was a donation party on one occasion for Benjamin U. Watkins, and along with rabbit pie, fried cakes, and other eatables came a pair of mittens made from the skin of a black cat, helped out with buffalo hide. Again son-in-law Datus bloomed out into poetry, immortalizing the donated mittens in the following couplet:

Cat skin and buffalo make a mighty mitten,  
 Wasn't it a lucky day for dad when they killed the kitten?

#### FAMILY REPARTÉE

Brother William stood before the glass, combing his abundant ringlets and at the same time reciting:

"Rising curl upon curl in promiscuous confusion —

"Yes," broke in Ju Ann, recalling her geography lesson, "surrounded by shallow and tempestuous seas, the navigation of which is exceedingly dangerous!"

#### OUT OF HIS MOUTH

An old Scotchman was obliged to preach for a living, and he worked up a very fine discourse for his audience out of the story of Jonah and the whale. In order to more powerfully impress the tale upon the minds of his innocent hearers, he reiterated and emphasized the points of the story.

He began one epoch in his discourse with the query,

"What kind of a fash (fish) was it that swallowed Jonah? It could na' ha' been a codfish, for no one yet ever saw a codfish big enough to swallow a man. It could na' ha' been a pike, for no one ever saw a pike big enough to swallow a man. It could na' ha' been a carp —"

But at this juncture an old lady in the back of the house screamed out: "It was a *whale*!" Whereupon the preacher set his jaw and, standing in an attitude of anger and chagrin, replied: "Ye old harridan, I wad as leave ye wad take the victuals out of my children's mouths as the sarmint out of mine!"

### SOME CHILD SAYINGS

#### *Wolves in Sweden*

One evening as it was growing dark, mother said to Brother Will: "You haven't gone for the cows yet; it is time to go." He replied, "I am afraid." "But of what?" mother asked. "Oh, I am afraid of the wolves in Sweden!"

He was a very studious and thoughtful child. He loved stories of animals, and probably acquired his fear of Scandinavian wolves from Peter Parley's Natural History. He loved to use big words, and once, when mother asked what some odor was, he exclaimed: "Why, I don't smell anything, mother; you must have very fine olfactories!"

So much for anecdote as I will append here a part of a writing Brother William read at the Golden Wedding of William Utter and his wife. The historical trend of mind in our elder brother made him wish to know, as did I, the events of long ago in our family and he once wrote an imaginary journal purporting to be that of our grandmother while crossing the mountains from New Jersey to Ohio. It is a document we would wish to preserve for his descendants as well as being of interest in itself, for he would not write such a description without there being in it valuable instruction as to the period so eventful in our family history and yet so little known.

## RACHEL WATKINS' JOURNAL

PITTSBURG, 25 July, 1800.

We at last reached this place after a tiresome journey of six weeks. We left Elizabethtown, N. J., on the tenth of June. I greatly feared the journey and before we started used to say to mother: "Mother, the road to Kentucky is as dark as night to me," but she would say, "Why, Rachel, what do you mean? 'Tis as light as day to me," and so she urged us and was always ready to go. My brother Robert rode across the mountains in 1799 and returned with glowing reports of the new land. "You could ride," he said, "for a whole day and not find a stone to throw at a bird." This took my husband's mind, for his ten acres were so stony that he often had to carry the earth on his hoe to cover the seed corn. But one story that Brother Robert told impressed us more than anything. A settler from Jersey had taken a farm in the Millcreek valley and cleared four or five acres in 1798, intending to plow the land and sow wheat, but he could not plow it and when September came he determined to sow without plowing, but the weeds were so that he could not get thro', so he mounted a horse and rode through, scattering the grain as he went. When Robert was there last summer the wheat was six feet high and as thick as it could stand. We had for ten years been hearing a song the burden of which was:

The girls will sit and sew,  
And the boys will reap and hoe,  
And we'll hunt the buffalo  
On the banks of the O-hi-o.

26 July.

I had no chance to write anything on our way. Sometimes we camped out but usually stopped at taverns and private houses to stay over night. At one place we wanted to stay over night but the folks could not understand our language nor we theirs. Mother talked to them in Low Dutch but they could not understand; she said they were High Dutch people. Mother has been a great comfort to me; she is of a cheerful and hopeful temper while I am fearful and despondent.

James is one of the best of men but he is totally deaf and I can only communicate with him by signs, though I can understand what he says. After my marriage with him I felt so lonely that after father's death I had mother come to live with us. James is greatly attached to her and tho' she is over sixty she has more courage and strength of mind than I. Speaking of James being deaf reminds me of what happened to us while crossing a river. The wheels of the wagon ran over a stone and the sudden jar loosened the tongue of the wagon from the yoke, the tongue fell to the ground, the wagon stopped and James calmly drove the oxen on across. When he looked back and saw the wagon standing in the river and mother and me laughing with all our might, he swung his hat and laughed with us and took it for a good joke, though getting all in order again was not so funny.

27 July.

To-day and yesterday we have been looking about for a boat to take us down to Fort Washington, five hundred miles below here on the Ohio River. At first we thought we would have to join with others and build a boat, but we heard of one for sale to-day and went to look at it. I wanted a big boat, enough for fifteen or twenty families, but this was a wretched little thing and did not look as if it had room for even two or three. I condemned it at once and told James I would rather stay here all summer and help build a big boat so that we could float down the river in some sort of safety. Mother thought this little boat would do; it would hold three families, and if we could find five men to make the crew we would do very well. I fear the dangers of the water and also of the Indians, tho' we have been told that for the last five years, thanks to General Wayne, no one has been molested. We heard to-day of a young man who was making up a herd of cattle and horses to drive thro' the woods to Fort Washington and to-morrow we will see if we can put in our oxen and our horse if he does not charge too much. No road to Fort Washington has yet been cut through. There is only a path and very few houses at which we could stop. There are more settlers on the Virginia side than on the other side. The road

that we have passed over in coming here was bad enough. To encourage me they told me at one place where we stopped that the road was much better than it used to be; that there were only two or three places where we would have to let the wagon down with ropes. We did not let it down with ropes but I think we ought to have done so. I never thought a wagon could get down such steep pitches without being broken or oversetting.

28 July.

The young man agreed to take our oxen and horse through for ten dollars. He will start next Monday. We have been talking with the different movers encamped here and arriving every day and trying to raise a company to build a big boat, but it doesn't seem to work. James can't talk to the people and mother is in favor of a small boat and wants to start at once. She says that it will cost us more than we can pay to stay here on expenses and bear our share in building a large boat.

29 July.

We reached a conclusion last night. Mother and I talked it over and went to see Allens and Flemings. In the latter family are, besides the father, one grown son and one of eighteen years. So we will have a crew of six men. The price of the boat is seventy-five dollars. This morning Allen went over and bought the boat for the party and this afternoon it will be brought down to the landing and we will begin to load. They tell me that it will take us more than two weeks to float down and I fear that we will run out of money. The tavern bills we had to pay in Pennsylvania cut deeply into our hundred dollars that we started with. We stopped in Pennsylvania and James worked two weeks in harvest at fifty cents a day. Our stock of provisions which we brought from Jersey is nearly exhausted. We still have some of the big cheese that was mistaken for a grindstone by some who saw it.

30 July. Saturday.

The boat was brought down and we unloaded our wagon of its heavy freight, took out the nail machine which was the first that had ever been seen here, took out the anvil and the black-



smith's tools, the great chests and the bedding and took the wagon apart and stowed it away under the roof, putting the wheels in the bottom of the boat. We then loaded the stuff the best way we could. Allen's and Fleming's wagons were put aboard in like manner and an hour ago all was loaded. The men then set about making a fireplace and mother and I went to the village to lay in provisions for the voyage.

Monday Evening, 1 August, 1800.

We attended meeting yesterday and heard preaching, and at daylight this morning unmoored and started on our perilous voyage! None of our crew have ever been down the river before. We were soon borne out of sight of the settlements and were on the rushing waters of the lonely river. Owing to the steep crumbling banks the trees do not reach down to water's edge but the hills are crowned to the very top with trees, often crowded with underbrush. I could not help thinking before we had gone ten miles how easy it would be for Indians to hide in the bush of the banks and fire on us and kill our men at the oars, but mother would hear nothing of that kind and made me ashamed of indulging such thoughts.

Friday, 5 August.

No Indians have appeared. We are crowded in our little boat and the company is none too good. I have to watch my little Robert, three years old, and am in mortal fear lest he tumble into the river and be drowned. We passed the settlements at the mouth of the Muskingum yesterday. They were made twelve years ago. Some of the settlers have good houses and large fields. I never saw corn so rank and high before. Watermelons were ripe and we stopped to buy. I was just going out over the plank when Allen jerked it from under me and I fell into the river. Luckily the water was not deep. My husband struck Allen and they had a fight and James had the worst of it for his eyes were blackened. I think I never saw as mean folks as those Allens. Whenever we have passed settlements we have stopped and bought roasting ears and so have fared very well.

Saturday, 13 August.

We reached the mouth of the Little Miami and stopped.



This place is five miles above Fort Washington. At Round Bottom, three miles up the valley of the Little Miami, there has been a fort for the last five years and there is a considerable settlement.

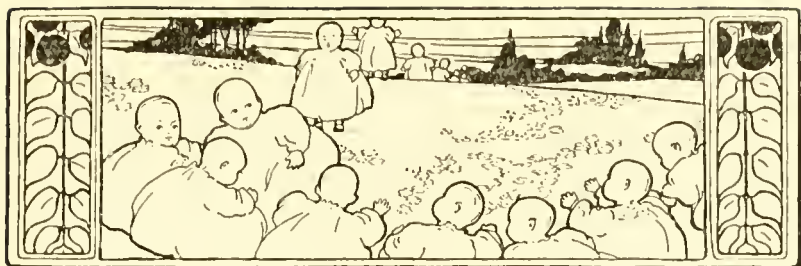
We shall have to wait here for our cattle and horse. The only thing worth telling on our trip from the Muskingum down was the trick which the pilot put on old Allen. We came to a place called Letart's Falls where there are rapids and a settler near by makes a living by piloting boats down the rapids tho' James and mother said there was no need whatever of a pilot. But we hired him and paid him three dollars and Allen had the steering oar in the stern. As soon as the boat was in the swift water he began to shout, "To the right!" and Allen bent to the oar with all his might, but before the boat could answer the helm he shouted, "To the left!" and so on all the way down the falls. Allen tugged and got red in the face and owing to the cover of the boat could not see but that we were in great danger. The fact was that we were in the channel current and in no danger, needed no pilot and the shouting was all a sham. Monday.

We have found a cabin on shore and moved into it and the boat is unloaded. When the cattle come we shall go down to Fort Washington which is a considerable place, tho' there is only one brick house in it, and will probably settle in the Millcreek Valley, which Brother Robert thinks is the best location.



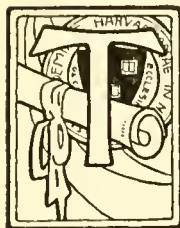
Joseph Ray Watkins





## CHAPTER XVII

### WHAT THE YEARS HAVE BROUGHT



THE day is far spent, and the calm of evening has come, the time of looking far back into the past and far forward into the future — the time of dreams and the time of loneliness for those who walked our way awhile and then departed by a way we have not tried; and

“We can but wonder how very fair  
It needs must be since they tarry there.”

The first to lay down the burden of life was the eldest; the kind heart of our brother William grew still on December 19, 1898. After his departure Sister Julia came and made us a visit, which we all remember with satisfaction. It was some two years after that loss of hers, which was also our loss, and we talked over the past and concerning the last days of Brother William. She regretted most of all that his grandchildren could not know him well. As she wrote just after his passing from earth: “We feel that the loss to his grandchildren is irreparable. His own children have in a measure reaped the lesson of his life, but the grandchildren he loved so well will never know much about him.”

While Sister Julia was visiting us in Hiram, Ohio, we went for an outing to a popular resort some two miles from our home, called the Ledges. This is a picturesque spot, where a singular

upheaval in some remote period has transformed the earth's surface into rugged rocks and deep fissures. Here wild flowers and beautiful ferns cling, and birds flit among its solitudes. We spread our table under the overshadowing trees and had a happy day together. Julia always enjoyed excursions of this kind when she saw something new, being very appreciative of any addition to her knowledge of nature or art. All day we wandered among these interesting scenes and drove home in the evening declaring our picnic a success.

At that time our sister seemed to be quite well and strong, and as we parted and she mounted a seat on the stage to go to the railroad station, I thought she would, like her father's family, live to be eighty; but not so, for before another summer she was gone from this earth. She was a good and faithful mother, and brought up a large family uncomplainingly. Six of her eight children grew to maturity, and I recall the devotion she gave them in their helpless childhood. Victor, the sixth child, died when he was about six months old; the next baby, a little girl named Grace Darling, was taken away at the age of eighteen months by infantile paralysis.

Julia tarried with her children three years after our brother's passing, growing weaker and weaker toward the end, until on February 23, 1902, upon the sixty-eighth anniversary of her birth, she left her daughters and son without either of the parents they had loved and honored. I go back and trace the course of their life together — William and Julia: for twenty-eight years William followed his chosen profession. We have told of the days when he taught in country schools; later he became superintendent of schools in different towns in Ohio — Galion, Lebanon, McArthur, Middletown, and Pomeroy. He went to reside in Dayton, Ohio, in 1873, and for three years was principal of one of the largest district schools in that city. Later he became professor of modern languages in the Dayton High School, where he taught for twelve years. I tried to picture, in one of my early chapters, William and me as we stood before the map of the world in our old sitting room at home, and told that from his childish tongue the names of far-away places rolled. More than half a century



Julia Morris Watkins



William Watkins, aged 50





later it was remarked of him that he had the greatest enthusiasm for the study of geography, and plead for more rational methods of teaching this "humanizing branch."

As the years brought little children to his home, our brother's cup of joy filled. The eldest, Rosamond Leslie, was to become her father's right hand. When Brother William gave up the profession of teaching in 1888 he entered the abstract of title business. This was to be his work for the rest of his active life. Rose began with him, and carried on the business for almost fourteen years after she was left without her loving father. Her loyalty to him stood any test; she was dependable then as she is now. She remained single until after Brother William's death and then, in the spring of 1901, she was married to Joseph Fraser.

The second child was Helen May, our "little Nell," whose starry mind went out in youth, to shine here only in the life of her son, William Watkins Truesdell. What a sad summer was that of 1894 in our brother's family! Agnes' little son, her first-born, died July 11th of diphtheria, and three days later Helen, after but a week's illness, was gone beyond recall. It seemed all too sad that her bright intelligence, her lovable and winsome manners, her fair face, were never to be a part of our brother's home circle more. Her husband, John M. Truesdell, had passed away two years before, on March 17, 1892. He was a scholarly man and a true mate for Nell; and he was not thirty-five when the call came, and this dear niece was a widow. Theirs was the first marriage of that generation in our family. Their wedding occurred on the last day of the year 1885. The little bride was a sweet picture that day, with her heavy fair hair and well-formed features, the light of intelligence illuminating her young face — ah, little Nell is yet sadly missed out of this world!

Though so short that she could stand beneath her husband's extended arm, she had yet a womanly dignity and carriage that made her seem not diminutive when standing by herself. I am sure that as she stood before some social or literary club it was not of her physical stature that her audience thought, but of the height of her grasp of things intellectual.

Her first child, Paul Watkins Truesdell, was born January 19, 1887. For only one year was he the joy of his parents, when he was taken from this world, never to know orphanhood. Her husband's education was finished in the European universities of Zürich and Linz, where he spent four years in study. After their marriage and the birth of their first child, Nell went abroad, to see what John had seen, as well as to gain the inspiration of a great past for her own eager mind. With rare insight she absorbed and assimilated the influences of other lands and peoples. After her return from Europe her second child was born, William Watkins Truesdell. When Willie was but a little past two years old his father was taken from earth in the strength of his young manhood. Two years more the little mother cherished their child, and then she gave him to her stricken parents as Death touched her, and our brother's namesake was an orphan. Thankful are we that this son can keep alive the memory of the brief but happy married life of Nell and John.

Paul, the third child of William and Julia, was a blessing to his parents as long as they lived. The fiftieth birthday of our brother was celebrated by his family in a way I am pleased to record. When he came to the table that October morning, which was both his birthday and wedding anniversary, he found his plate surrounded by packages, which had even overflowed on his chair. He opened them to find all sorts of wearing apparel, even to a rain coat, a suit of clothes alone being missing among his gifts. The presents were abundant; a number of articles were in dozens — his cup seemed full. And then, when he turned over his plate, there were fifty dollars in gold from his eldest daughter and his twenty-year-old son! With tear-filled eyes he exclaimed: "I have the best children in the world!" Even in those days Paul was the promising business man, as he is now the successful one. For years he worked side by side with his Uncle Joseph in that great business which our younger brother built up in so masterly a manner. To-day Paul is president of the J. R. Watkins Medical Company.

There are books of ours yet to be written; I cannot, with the burdens of my years lying more and more heavily, attempt



Children of William and Julia Watkins



to do justice to the history making to-day. Paul's summer tours in Europe with his dear wife Florence and the boys need much more than I can say here. Last summer they took Willie Truesdell with them, and this summer Josephine and Gus were companions of their journeyings. In their large touring car, with every advantage that money can purchase, I wonder if Paul did not think back to that first anticipated trip in 1888, when he went with his father and mother to the scenes they had read about and dreamed over by the fireside of home — to the tombs of the great whose written words or lofty deeds had thrilled them in the quiet of their family sitting room long ago.

From out his rich memory stores I know his father could bring such information as no guide book gives, and his understanding enthusiasm must have left a memory that his son cherishes above anything that riches can purchase to-day. To have gone abroad with such a one, who had drunk deeply not only at the fountain of English literature but also of that written in the *lingua franca* of Europe and in German, is not accorded to all travelers; and then to holiday in Europe with one who has long desired such a trip and prepared thoroughly for it with eager desire, adds a deep enthusiasm that Paul must hold as the benediction of his first tour abroad in lands across the Atlantic.

It is a hospitable home to visit on Wabasha Street in Winona, Minnesota. Our elder brother returned to Ohio from Minnesota, but his only son is a permanent resident of this far northern state. Warm is the welcome of our "Lady Bountiful" in that beautiful home, so perfect in every appointment; and there their children, Roderick, Joe, William, and little Florence, have advantages manifold. Florence Henderson Watkins is a queenly mother and may her sons, who alone wear the Watkins name, honor it and make it stand for best aims and accomplishments.

I think of our girls far out on the coast of our great West, of Di Vernon, Diana or Doane — she is called variously. I do not think the others will care if I tell here our brother's tribute to his third daughter. He said one time to me that,



for innate goodness, he had no child the equal of Doane. I know she has been a patient wife and mother as she was a faithful and devoted helper in the home of her childhood.

Sweet-voiced Agnes, so early widowed — her children, as those of Doane, must make up to her much of what her life has missed. The name of Agnes Wickfield tells again the love of their parents for some book-folk. Sympathetic and thoughtful, Agnes as girl and woman is sweet to remember. I am glad that she, too, had her trip across the waters with other musicians that summer of 1902, for hers is a music-hungry soul. She was married to Andrew Crawford on November 18, 1891, and on an Easter Sunday, April 12, 1903, she was left a widow with her three little children, Donald, Rosamond, and Dick. The siege of diphtheria which took Nell and the first-born of Agnes and Andrew prostrated Agnes with severity, but her life was spared. We see that our brother William's family have had their share of the sadness of life.

Josephine Joy was the last child. We know her still as "Bam," contracted from Rose's name for her — Bambino. Once I loved to hear her whistle like the birds in our south orchard long ago, but the years have stolen from me the sweetness of sound. Bam is a businesslike woman, and I have noted with interest her development, as I have that of all my nieces, watching to see in them the evolution of characteristics I knew in their foreparents. To Josephine it was given, as to the youngest in our family, to care for her mother in her last earthly days. She and Gustavus A. Lehmann were married October 16, 1895, and have made a pair to be depended upon in an emergency, which I think a high compliment for anyone.

Often during my later years I have sat in my quiet home and thought of dear ones far away on the waters or in distant parts of our own land, and I am thankful that in all our journeyings we have been kept from fatal accidents. The generation following me must write of the lands and people they have seen — to me it has been given to write of beginnings. We are glad to have our party of this summer back in safety, and now we think many times of Grace and Ernest and dear little

Mary Eleanor and Maude King, out on the high seas, beginning their voyage around the world.

The first days of my married life were the hard and cruel ones of the Civil War, and that, too, in Minnesota, with the horrors of the Indian massacre about us; but Alvah and I were young then, and stronger for all conflicts. Though we lost our first-born, he was with us when we sorely needed the cheer and comfort of his sweet presence. After we returned to live in Ohio again, two other children were born to us. Adelaide Gail was born in Meigs County, Ohio, and William Watkins in the adjoining county of Athens, where his father was also born. In appearance our younger son is not at all like his brother, who left our home so long ago. He too, as others of our race, grew to love books above all things. He has that quality of love for literature which has made him work to be able to understand the great masters of the pen. As our brother for whom he was named, he has found it easy to commit to memory lofty and noble poems as well as almost anything in the shape of a rhyme. Our son was willing to make any sacrifice to obtain the education he craved and fit himself for the position he desired as an educator. He received his degree of Master of Arts from Chicago University and began his life as Professor of English in Stetson University in DeLand, Florida. He was married to Bessie Grable, a classmate of his in Hiram College, June 18, 1897. They are the parents of my two dear grandchildren, Dwight Grable and Winifred Lilian.

Our only daughter was graduated from Hiram College in June, 1894, and sailed for India in September of the same year. For almost thirteen years the mail has brought us weekly letters from that far country. As a missionary of the Christian Woman's Board of Missions she has conducted a school for girls in Mahoba, a town in the United Provinces of India.

Since I began to write this narrative, the companion of more than fifty years of my life has left ours a broken circle. He passed away with words of joy and peace upon his lips, June 14, 1912, only nine days before the seventy-fifth anniversary of his birth.

The years brought more of wealth to our younger brother than our family had ever before known, many times over. His business acumen and upright, honest endeavor were richly rewarded, and he won that for which he strove; when he had attained success, he had won it not by being a hard master, neither by selfishness in carrying on his business. The success of those he employed who honestly served his firm was always a satisfaction to him. He seemed ever ready to share the successes of his undertaking. The growth of his business was steady and arose upon good foundations; he was neither rash, speculative, nor venturesome. As I am writing these pages for our own family and not for the great public, I like to dwell longest upon that which is our own and does not belong to the general reader. To Minnesota and nineteen other states he was the head of a great dispensing firm whose agents traveled all roads and whose wagons were well-known sights in every farming community of those states — to us he was some one more.

I remember the home in Winona which Sister Mary kept in such beautiful order, looking "well to the ways of her household" and never eating "the bread of idleness." I think of what Grace meant to that home of our younger brother, the life and youth she brought there, and of her careful rearing. I remember her going to a girls' boarding school in Washington City, and later of her trip abroad after her graduation with a party well conducted, and then her return to her parents and former companions the same daughter and friend.

The years were not to go unclouded; all too soon the shadows began to fall. It is painful to come to those parts of our story where the last long shadows begin to appear and those we have loved and cherished most must go out to return no more, must fare forth alone on the long journey. The departure from this life of our sister, Mary Ellen Heberling, occurred on April 15, 1904. While her health was never the best, yet her appearance suggested vitality, and I had confidently expected that she would outlive me; I had planned in my mind to leave it to her to carry out some of my requests. On a sudden, like a flash from a clear sky, while giving orders



Alvah P. Frost



Adelaide Gail Frost



for the midday meal, she felt a change within herself which was attended by great pain. A physician was called and she was at once taken to the hospital, where an operation was declared imminent.

At this critical time, in entire ignorance of it all, Brother Joseph and Grace were absent upon a tour in the South. They were called up over long distance telephone and found in Cincinnati. With all haste, by special car, they came home and found her still alive and conscious. They were in time to hear her last messages. One who was there has told me that she passed away believing in the promises of Jesus. She left behind the memory of a true and faithful wife and mother; her domestic life was one of devotion. The servants of her household attested to her kindness and consideration by long terms of service. A friend who was with her much during her last illness testifies to the abundance of her charities, dispensed quietly and without ostentation.

I am writing these lines not only for our family in general and for my niece, Grace Watkins King, but for the little granddaughter of Sister Mary, her precious name-child, Mary Eleanor. Her great-aunt hopes the little brown-eyed maid may some day in her womanhood look into these annals and think of this one back of her, a cheerful voiced lady whose smile was sweet and whose carriage was dignified yet gracious. the grandmother who passed from earth before Mary Eleanor's father and mother were married.

On November 19, 1904, Grace became the bride of Ernest L. King of New York City. She began housekeeping in the Broadway home, so lately bereft of its mother. When I was there a few weeks ago I could but note how few were the real changes in the arrangement of the old home, and I liked that fact.

The mother of Ernest has her own place in our family's story, and it is noteworthy that, left a widow with three sons and a daughter to rear, she brought up a family which would do credit to the combined efforts of both parents. When a woman left alone to bring up a family of boys can educate them, polish off the corners, and give the world three good



business men free from the failures that are common, it speaks well for both mother and sons.

After seven years our brother was married the second time, and we felt that his choice of Mrs. Martha King was a wise one. He had hoped in this connection to enjoy the evening of his life on the little farm "by the marshy lakeside." They were married in Baltimore, September 23, 1911. Bright plans were formed for a balmy winter in Jamaica, and they, with Grace and Ernest and Mary Eleanor and Maude King, started from Winona for that island on December 4th. Ten days later they sailed from New York, arriving safely in Kingston in due time. December 21st brother went for a drive about the island, calling upon friends he had met on former visits. That afternoon our dear brother was seized with acute indigestion, and in the space of but one short hour he was gone from all of life's joys and sorrows.

How the news struck us at the point of Christmas-time last year! It sped to our doors by telegram, and we heard that our relatives had taken a steamer for home at once; and so it came about that we met in Winona on the last day of the year, to see a casket borne forth to the burial chamber amid a profusion of lovely flowers. From twenty states, twenty perfect wreaths were sent by salesmen of his company; and we felt that those who had been connected with him in affairs of business, as well as more personal friends, regretted his departure from this life. We heard with the sorrow one does not write of his sudden death away off in a land of strangers. Brother had made friends with a wealthy Spanish merchant on a former visit to Kingston, whose name was Immanuel Lyon. In their hour of shock and sorrow, his son was of the greatest assistance to our relatives.

In November of the year in whose last weeks we now are, I went to see, on the evening of Thanksgiving day, the opening of the new Administration Building of our brother's firm. It is a monument to the founder of the business and his principles. As I sat on the marble landing to the private offices of Paul and Ernest and looked down a sweep of two hundred feet, and saw the beautiful soft light falling upon myriads of pieces of opales-



Mary Ellen Watkins



cent mosaic laid on pilaster and panel, on fair-veined Italian or rich yellow Sienna marble, as my eye noted the harmonious designs in mosaic and stained glass and took in the graceful pedestals of Alps green marble, and as I beheld all the glows and the scintillations in the light-filled vista, I could but look on my brother's portrait and sigh and muse. The little boy who stood beside his mother's chair and said, "I will be a rich man!" was not there to see this crowning building. The Symphony Orchestra played sweetly through that hall; crowds of people passed by and admired the beauty of the offices, the inlaid work, and the handsome rotunda; but a quiet little man with fair skin and white hair was absent. He had with care and patience worked out the plan of the large business; with foresight he had thoughtfully felt his way; and now a great business was established, and its latest achievement was open to view — but he had seen only the foundations of the edifice. It came to me as it had before, that but for him this would not have been. He had not worked alone, and yet without him it would not have been.

The evening was a success and apparently appreciated by all the guests. I noted Maude King, the one daughter of my sister-in-law, tall and charming and accomplished, and not only this, but a girl of mental ability. Then my eye ran along the line of those receiving and I meditated. In the silence imposed by ears dull of hearing, I could dream for a moment of what had been far back in the years — of what had been and was gone. Our family will go on; there will be growth; may it attain to some of the ideals held dear and paramount by our father and mother.

In a conversation with Dr. Stewart, he spoke of the fact that brother had asked him to go with him on the trip to Jamaica. He had called upon Dr. Stewart, as he had not been in the best of health, and made this suggestion. Our old friend said he cherished a regret that he had not gone. The story of our younger brother is closed and we must leave it now, though the pen lingers in love and memory.

The story of our sister is pleasant in the telling, though she has not been without grief. Four daughters came to the

home of Ida and Datus. Estella and my namesake Julia were both born on the farm at Pearl Lake, and two better daughters I cannot picture to mind. In 1870 the family went to Indianapolis, Indiana, where Datus engaged in the real estate business. He bought up between three and four thousand acres of timber land in Arkansas for a wealthy syndicate.

In 1884 Datus bought father's farm on Pearl Lake, and they removed to that old home and there spent happy years. During that time our brother-in-law was elected to the lower house of the Minnesota legislature, where he gained much credit by introducing and securing the passage of a bill locating the State Reformatory at St. Cloud. The leading part he took in securing other needed legislation resulted in his being appointed superintendent of the Reformatory, and in 1887 they went to St. Cloud to spend seven years doing good service for the state.

Two other daughters came to our sister — first, Amelia Janet, who lived but twelve June days; and then the little heart was too weak to beat longer, and our tender sister had to see her baby die. Seven years later the last sweet baby brightness shone for them through not quite six precious years. Jeanie was born when her two eldest sisters were young girls of sixteen and thirteen, and she was a bright and loving addition to her home. Jeanie was a fair, angelic looking child, winsome and bright. I am glad I saw her and that her memory can live on my pages.

In her southern home my little sister and her family are spending happy years after their pleasant and successful period in colder Minnesota. I like to think of Ida surrounded by her orange blossoms and roses, which are not sweeter than her fragrant life; and my thought dwells on the devotion of her daughters, whose love for their dear mother passes words. Estella was married to Dr. Harry A. Atwood on September 6, 1893. Her bridegroom belongs to the family of E. H. Atwood, who had a home on the shores of Pearl Lake, and whom I have mentioned in another chapter. They had every opportunity to know each other well, as they were playmates and schoolmates and were acquainted in all the formative



Martha King Watkins







Entrance to Offices



period of youth, and it was but a beautiful consummation when they were married in St. Cloud.

Estella and Harry have never been selfish in their home life, but have shared it with more than one who has had need of what their home and lives could give. There are young people who think of that California home as of the home of parents, and in Estella is a portion of the spirit of our mother. She has ever been interested in educational matters. She taught both before and after she was married, and for the love of it. She is a graduate of the St. Cloud Normal School, and is still deeply interested in educational matters. In Riverside Estella is a member of the school board, and at the last election received more votes than any other candidate voted for that election. Julia has the womanly home-keeping abilities, and is the comfort of her parents in an unusual degree—loyal and true she lives her life, rewarding all that has ever been done for her in a life of devotion. I take comfort in my namesake.

As I have been writing these annals I have often paused to regret that so much of our family history has been lost in the flight of a hundred years. Almost everything authentic has been handed down by our father, who had a retentive historic memory as well as a fine verbal one. He retained his faculties in a remarkable manner until his death, in his eighty-second year.

When Datus and Ida removed from Pearl Lake Place to Indianapolis he came to our home, which was then in Meigs County, Ohio. He spent a summer with us, and we could see that he was longing to be back at Pearl Lake, or again fancying Cincinnati would help him to be more contented. He finally decided to go to the nearer of the home places, and so he paid a visit to Cincinnati. There his old friend, James Challen, introduced him to Mrs. Zelinda Wood, a homeopathic physician. She was a woman who in early life, through much energy and exertion, had obtained a good education; she had studied French and prepared herself to be a teacher, as well as taking her medical degree. She went as a missionary teacher and physician to the French provinces of Canada

under a Baptist Mission Board. She was of a courageous and independent character, ready for emergencies. When our father married her, she was a widow with one child, a daughter. After their marriage, father returned to Minnesota and settled down again at Pearl Lake Place. Here he spent some years amid the quiet scenes of rural life. Father passed much time in his study and with the pen. He wrote for the Original Essay columns of a church paper, *The Christian Standard*, for years, while his wife looked after the household and practiced medicine as opportunity offered. With hired help they carried on the farm until the decline of life suggested their removal to a less rigorous climate, and so they removed to Cameron, Missouri, and made their home there. A family of cousins upon the Watkins and another on the Utter side lived there, and when father received a call to minister to the church there it seemed wise to do so. In this way Cameron came to be the scene of our dear father's last earthly days.

Cousin Araminta Utter (Mrs. C. E. Packard) lived on a farm near Cameron, and her appreciative presence meant much to our father. Her father, William Utter, was much more like a brother than a nephew to him. Within easy driving distance of the town lived our cousin, Sam Watkins, a good man and true, not unlike his father. It was while father lived in Cameron that Uncle Joseph died in Morrow, Ohio, and I will here insert the obituary notice our father wrote concerning his brother. It recalls the past of which I have written in the first chapter of our annals.

My only brother is dead. He died at his residence near Morrow, Warren County, Ohio, on May 2, 1882. He had passed his seventy-seventh year. He embraced Christianity when he was about twenty-eight, but his tender conscientiousness dates from the time he knew good from evil.

He was nearly seven years my senior, and as we were always together in our boyhood, his quick-sighted sense of propriety saved me from many an error. My mother was very watchful lest I should make some terrible blunder in boyhood, but she could not always be present with me; however, the ever watchful elder brother was to me a duplicate of mother's carefulness.

When nine years old Joseph lost his sight by cataract, but after



Ida W. Myers.



Datus E. Myers.







Jean Myers



Estella Myers, aged 5      Julia Myers, aged 2



two years it was restored by an operation at the hand of Dr. John Martin, a skillful surgeon of the East. I mention this circumstance to account for an act of almost unparalleled generosity, for about five years after Joseph was restored to sight, I, too, became blind, and after all the help we could get from physicians of that period, it was discovered that I was to be left very deficient in sight; so Joseph pleaded with our parents to bestow the entire patrimony upon me, alleging that he was able to get along better without it than I was with it. So he voluntarily and against the advice of our parents disinherited himself for my sake. Such examples of brotherly affection deserve record for the credit of the nineteenth century.

That is not all. His religion took the style of that described in James 1:27, the pure and undefiled kind — visiting the widow and the fatherless in their affliction and keeping himself unspotted from the world. The fruit of benevolence, truthfulness, and uprightness shone out through all his long, quiet, and laborious life. His integrity was so well known that his neighbors said of him: "Joseph Watkins never told a lie in his life."

He was a man, to take him all in all, for benevolence of purpose, purity of heart, and persevering industry in the most exhausting labor, whose like it will be long ere we look upon again.

He was to me much more than most fathers are to their sons; I tremble to think what I might have been had not such an elder brother been mine. He is gone, and I am bereaved of this best of brothers. It will not be long till we shall meet and greet him on the other shore. I owe to his guidance under Christ and to his fraternal benevolence all I am here or all I ever hope to be hereafter.

He was a tender husband, a kind father, and a devoted friend. He has left behind him a wife and five children, who have all made the Christian profession; and their hearts must ache in loneliness for the loss of a beloved husband and a venerated father.

A grandson of Uncle Joseph, Wilbert W. Watkins, and his wife Nettie, live in Winona, Wilbert having gone there to work in Brother Joseph's laboratory a number of years ago. He is the compounder, and in this position of trust he has shown himself, like his forefathers, honest, industrious, and capable.

In a quiet little home our aged father spent his last years in study and the enjoyment of his church relationship, but at last the time came when we had to give up our saintly father. A ministerial convention of his brothers in the church met in Cameron, and though he had eagerly anticipated attending its sessions it did not seem wise at last for him to do so. What

his friends thought of him in his age seems to me well shown in an editorial from *The Christian Evangelist* published at the time of his departure. It says:

It is not our purpose here to speak at length of his work. He is known better and more widely as a writer than as a preacher. From the very beginning, and in spite of the obstacle of defective sight, he has been a close, constant, and conscientious student of the Word of God and especially of the New Testament in the original Greek. His original contributions on scriptural themes to our various journals have always been distinguished for simplicity of style, depth of thought, and sweetness and devoutness of spirit. He was emphatically a man of one book, all his studies bearing in some way upon the Bible; and all the varied riches of his scholarly researches were consecrated with a beautiful and child-like simplicity and humility to the triumphs of the Gospel and the edification of the church. We found him at eighty still a student of the blessed Book, and as eager as ever to discover "the mind of the Spirit" hidden in some of its difficult passages — but we are to leave his work for other pens, while we speak briefly of the man. To know him was to love him. He combined in rare degree strength of intellect with tenderness of heart. We had occasion in speaking of him recently in these columns to call him the "Beloved St. John of the Christian Church," and we are confident that everyone who has enjoyed the privilege of intimate fellowship with him will appreciate the entire appropriateness of the appellation. He was as gentle and tender and affectionate as a gracious woman, and as spiritual as St. John himself. His presence and loving exhortations in the church always brought to mind the tradition concerning the beloved disciple, that when he was no longer able to walk he was carried into the church at Ephesus and closed every exhortation with the memorable words, "Little children, love one another."

That the estimate here recorded is that of others appears from the following extracts from letters received from Cameron and published in the church paper:

The world has just lost a great and good man. The dear old man, how we shall miss him! If there ever was a saint on earth, he certainly was one. Everybody loved him. I think his heart was overjoyed at the thought of meeting his fellow-workers in the convention. I never spoke to him without feeling like doing more for the Master. The last time I heard him speak was upon the day for Negro Missions. How enthusiastic he became! How glad he was to aid in the great work! He was faithful to the end.



Benjamin Utter Watkins



Zelinda Wood Watkins





Another, a young woman, wrote in the same paper:

He had planned to go to the convention Tuesday, and was so eager that he got up twice in the night to see if it were not time to rise. Then when morning came he seemed so well and so happy, and spent the time getting ready to go and talking with those who called. One of the brethren spoke of that most glorious reward, the "Well done, good and faithful servant" of the Master. Father Watkins said: "Yes, that is a glorious promise — a glorious promise." These words were no sooner uttered than death came to him, relieving him of life and fulfilling all his beautiful hopes of the life beyond. They say he died from apoplexy of the heart; who knows but what his death was caused by the great joy which he felt in meeting old friends and in thinking of heavenly things! He died about 11:30 a. m. . . . Surely it could be said of him as of Monroe: "If his soul were turned inside out, there would not be a spot on it." He wanted to die, and said Tuesday morning that he had prayed to God to take him from the earth if He could use him no longer."

Then the editor of the paper, his friend J. H. Garrison, goes on to say:

Blessed forever the memory of one who could inspire such reverence and affection in a young heart! That, perhaps, was the "use God had for him on earth" in his old age, even to manifest to the world the sweetness and beauty and glory of a fully developed Christian character. Blessed indeed the church that was permitted to enjoy the benefits of his counsel and inspiration of his example. May they not soon forget the lesson of his character and life and his tender exhortation: "Little children, love one another."

It was on March 15, 1890, that this event occurred, and we were without either of our parents. I remember how the word smote my heart when it reached me in Hiram, Ohio, where I had gone to be with Adelaide and William while they were being educated at that institution. This chapter has not been easy for me to write. I have felt almost like letting my pen fall. I have wished that my work upon these records might have been finished before so many of our family had gone, and yet I know what we have been more free from tragedy and untimely suffering than most families.

Our father's wife went to Des Moines, Iowa, after his death and settled in a cottage near Drake University. There she lived for a few years, when it was found necessary for her to go to a hospital for an operation, under which she passed

away. The good people of the Christian Church there came forward and showed what Christianity does in such a crisis. I. N. McCash, the grandson of Uncle Jimmie McCash, preached her funeral sermon. Her burial took place in Des Moines. Many honored her for her zeal and good endeavors.

The end must come, and we must see our beloved ones pass from the life that now is to the life that is to come. If they have lived and worked, have sown and reaped, rejoiced and sorrowed as men, we cannot but say they have been blessed. Here we would leave our token that they have lived and loved and blessed, a memento for their descendants, with a hope that our ancestors may be remembered for what they have done. If any of their generations shall linger with tender thought upon these pages, the pain of reference to their farewells will be repaid. They would wish their children and their children's children to get much from life and to give much to it, honoring the names their fathers gave them, not grieving for natural decay but "rejoicing in hope."





Joseph Watkins





Julia Watkins Frost







## CHAPTER XVIII

### VOICES FROM THE PAST



**S**ITTING in the lengthening shadows of life's eventide, I am thinking of the long-vanished years, of the bright days of youth, and of those who started out with me upon the journey. Many have since dropped by the way like the leaves of autumn, so but few are left to continue with me the little way beyond. The old farm which Grandfather James Watkins bought second from the government in 1804 has changed title but twice in a hundred years. When I visited it after an absence of more than thirty years, I could but stand under the walnut tree while the "tears would unbidden flow." True, there were still some things that reminded me of the dear ones, my brothers and little sister and father and mother, but they were few. I thought of all the things our ancestors had done to make us a home, even carving it out from the wilderness. Grandfather had cleared this farm, built buildings, planted orchards; our father, too, had wrought his share, despite his limitations. I seemed to feel as never before that they had passed on, had toiled and builded and sent us forth equipped for life's battle, and now were not — even the place where they had served knew them not. It was as though we had not worked and played, lived and loved right there — the old home was gone.

The house grandfather built, the barn, the corn crib, the

weave shop, the cellar house, the picket fence about the old garden (even the nails for which he had made himself), then the orchards he and our father planted,— where are they now? Searching for some familiar landmark, we go down to the spring, which in the long ago we called Deer Lick Spring. We found it full of silt — naught but dampness there, no flow of sweet, pure water. The sugar camp is now but a few scattered maple trees, only serving to mark the site of the grove where we children made sugar. The orchard south of our house, where in springtime hundreds of song birds congregated, is gone. Redbird and bluebird, orioles, wild canaries, sugar birds and meadow-larks with the mocking bird, once filled the fragrant air with delightful music; but they, too, are gone from what were leafy haunts of old. Even the dear old walnut tree, after surviving the storms of one hundred years, has lately lost its fine symmetrical top.

Looking further, I noticed near the walnut tree quite a pretty maple, and distinctly recalled the day our father planted the young sapling from which it had grown, though that was more than half a century ago. There it stood, a silent witness to attest to the fact that he had lived. Glad am I that he survives in a memory greener than the maple, and is remembered to the third generation of his descendants. His example lives in those who follow him with true and honest lives; he is not without witnesses of his own kind.

Our elder brother has left a record of a visit to the old farm. It is pasted in a time-worn scrapbook whose back is gone and whose pages are falling apart. I cannot bear that it should perish, for the letter is so like him and brings back so clearly the boy I used to know in the home of our childhood that I am copying it here — a voice from our past. Before some unknowing hand consigns the old book to the flames or rubbish pile, I want Brother William's words to live again on these pages of our annals. I think these well-written words are true glimpses of his boyhood, and must be prized as such by his children and grandchildren, and will be also by coming generations of his blood. It comes under the head of "Benson's

Letters" and the *nom de plume* is of evident origin. The letter is as follows:

MY DEAR EDITOR: My new stick that you admired and I had not time to tell you about is one I lately cut on the old place that my grandfather bought in 1804, and where my father and I were born. Along our south line the "Big Run" cut off two or three acres, too broken and hard to reach to be worth tilling; here a few fine oaks used to stand when I was a child, and after they were cut away the finest grove of locusts came up in their place. When I cut my stick I found these all dead or dying. Fine post trees were lying on the ground and slowly rotting away, and the place of the locusts was taken by a fine growth of sugar maples. I cut one of these and a friend has handsomely finished it for me.

I hoped to carry this and to feel myself nearer to the home of my childhood, but I cannot. To me it is much the same as any other stick; and that old home — though its acres, its hills and hollows are all there, it is gone; it is not. On the very spot of my birth I am a stranger in a strange land. It is not that those whom I knew in my youth are gone or changed — for that I had been prepared. But the barn had strangely shrunk. Once it was a large building, and its upper beam was a dizzy height to which it was a bold thing to climb, and from which to jump down on the hay had in it a spice of danger, just enough for good fun. Now it is a very small barn and rather low; and how grandfather could be satisfied with that north mow, so narrow that a good load of sheaves will go far towards filling it, I cannot see.

The apple tree across the road, where my grandfather's house stood, is the only one left of the old orchard, all of whose trees bore proper names — the Big Sour, the Cave, the Eggtop, the Goggin, and such home-made appellations, the very tradition of which is now lost; for it has been forgotten that there ever was an orchard there, and they now call it the well-field. This apple tree — no doubt it had a name, but I have forgotten it — is much smaller now than when I was a little boy at my grandmother's knee, learning from her and the pictures in the book the story of my country, and to hate the British; and how one cold winter day, she heard the thunder of the battle of Princeton, and her mother cried all day, but she was too young to fear for her father, who was in the fight. The good old lady had no doubts nor waverings, but denounced the British and their works, which were evil, and that continually, while our men were always right. With such nurture it is no wonder that I struck deep roots into my native soil, and that the sudden sight of the Stars and Stripes thrills me more than I can tell. That old apple tree, last

of all that my grandfather planted, is still alive and green, though shorn of its spreading boughs.

That the plowshare had passed over the ground where the house in which my father was born had stood, and that the meadow grass grows thick and high there, did not surprise me. Searching among the roots of the grass I found pieces of grandmother's china, and I seemed to remember the very plates and bowls.

Twice before, in late years, I had visited the ground and could not be satisfied; it would come right, and after a year or two the longing to see it and reconcile its present state with what I then thought it drove me to it again. This time cured me. I do not care to see it again, for it can never be reconciled. The change is in me as well as in it. I now see the farm as it is; then I did not understand it. For another reason, too, the haunts of my childhood are gone forever. I have woven them into the warp and woof of all my fancies. The Swedish wolves have chased me through our woods; just below them in Raymond's field the Niger flows, for I have often seen elephants feeding on an island there. Just below the spring, under a sugar tree by the run, was the spot where Paulding fell into a doze and overheard that wonderful debate of the animals, while a tall hickory which crowned the top of a neighboring knoll was where the eagle "composedly made a meal of both hawk and dove." Not twenty feet away is a scene in Synnove Golbakken, that wonderful story of Norwegian life, pure and sweet as the air of their pine-clad hills; there I stood and watched the eagle soaring and circling above the tallest tree, and picking it out for a nest. 'Tis but a few rods to the scene of one of the choice incidents of Reineke Fuchs; and the aged athlete Milo met his wretched death, devoured by wolves, held fast by his fingers in an oaken rail that lay along the back fence near the leaning tree.

Cummings' oak, bent, no doubt, by a storm into an arch, was a fairy castle to me, and under it the "Butterflies' Ball" and the "Grasshoppers' Feast" were held. The place where Jacob slept on his stone pillow at Luz was the open field; the groves which the good Josiah cut down were a fine growth of young locusts near by. Satyrs, hinds, and gazelles and the Wilderness of Kadesh were in the lower field, the sheep pasture of my earliest memories, and where we afterward raised the great wheat crop. The back orchard was the wilderness of Jericho, and a little beyond flowed the Jordan, not, however, through "stormy banks," but peacefully, like the Stillwater, and about as broad. Beyond Jordan, near where the dry elm stood which burned all one autumn night and in the morning lay a fallen giant on the ground, was an elder bush, under which the bondwoman, flying from the jealousy of her mistress and lost in the wilderness of Beersheba, dying with thirst, threw her child "and sat her down a good way off, as it were a bowshot," that she might not see him die.

Charles Lamb used to see the aged Benchers of the Temple to walk the earth as gods, so to me the woods had their fauns and dryads where now I see only beeches and sugar trees, and even the Bear's Nest Elm has no longer any power over me. I cannot now turn the back field into an African Karroo, and see the long line of dust betokening a countless herd of springboks coming on like an army. I cannot ring the wild horse with Washington Irving and catch that "fine black mare scrambling up the defile," not six rods from where I cut my stick.

'Tis plain the old farm is the stuff that dreams are made of and had better be unvisited. My stick cannot serve as a divining rod to call up the scenes and feeling of my youth, for these are gone with my youth and will return when it does. I am nearest these things when I am away from them, and I count myself happy that I left the old farm.

I have thought to have a little silver plate put on my stick, with the figures 1765, 1811, 1836, 1865. These dates mark our four generations, the four that I have known. Perhaps this might remind me that I do not stand alone. The memory of man runs not to the time that we were not right men. If my stick may not call up the fancies of my childhood, let it remind me that the most precious inheritance I can leave my children is a good opinion of their father. I am not in the world without a witness.—WILLIAM BENSON.

As I read this letter again to the end, I see my brother William from the time of his rather aggressive and masterful boyhood, down through the years, till he grew tender and gentle like his ancestors, ripened and enriched by the battles of life. The years did not take from but added to his natural ability. His great mind burned clearly to the last, and love increased more and more; his heart, too, grew deeper and more tender, and showed itself in overflowing love for us all.

His children have to remember that they were his joy and his pride. They will recall that although he was a bright light in the Royal Arcanum and Present Day Clubs and in later years in the Socialist party, he shone nowhere more brightly than in the circle of home, and in no place did he bring forth more freely than there things new and old from the riches of his intellect. His home and his family were always first with our brother William. I am thinking of the letter he wrote me when his first grandchild was born. He told me the exact



measurements of the little one, even to the length of the baby's foot; and then how he grieved when this loved babe, Paul Watkins Truesdell, died at the age of one year.

One by one he welcomed his grandchildren as a special boon to himself. Remember, Roderick and the two Williams and Joseph Ray, Junior, and Helen and Robert and Donald and Rosamond, that your grandfather, William Watkins, accounted each a treasure beyond computing! The babies, Richard and Florence, would have been so many more added delights to him. Keep in memory that he loved you all, and wished nothing more than that you should honor an unstained name and bless his house with sincere goodness and domestic kindness. As he himself chose great themes for thought, he would have you do the same. He has left record in a letter to a niece: "Cultivate the graces of the heart, for the heart is the best part of man."

I feel constrained to speak especially of the grandchild who was as his own son, for Willie Truesdell was given over to him by the hands of his little mother when they were loosening their clasp on all of earth's joy and pain. The scholarly young father, the brilliant young mother, gone, gone with the dew of youth yet on their brows — surely this grandchild needed all his grandparents could give him. How proudly would he have watched the development of his grandchildren through the years; each one he knew when babes was brightest and best! When little William Benson, Paul's youngest son, was first seen by him in 1898, he wrote me in November of that year: "Florence and little William Benson are here. He is a most sweet and beautiful babe — the finest of the flock." I wonder what he would have thought and said if he had lived to see the telegram I saw last June. It was one sent by Paul Watkins to Ernest King, just as the former was starting with a family party to tour Europe. It was received June 15, 1912, and was as follows:

Joe graduated to-day with highest honor and captured the three highest prizes — fifty dollars for History, fifty dollars for highest all around scholarship and character, also Harvard-Andover prize of three hundred dollars' scholarship in Harvard to scholar of highest

standing. Hand dope to Scotty Laird. Mail paper to Paris.—  
PAUL WATKINS.

Thus it was announced to us that Joseph Ray Watkins, Junior, had carried off the prizes at Andover, and I thought more of what it would have meant to our elder brother than I did even of what it was to Paul and Joe.

I will here submit a poem, probably the very last effort of our elder brother's life and dedicated to the memory of a young man, a son of Thomas Dill and his wife Emma, friends of our youth. This loss to our old friends brought back a host of memories to William, and he felt constrained to write these verses but a short time before his own passing "from off life's stage." These are the lines:

### IN MEMORIAM

CHALLEN DILL, DIED OCTOBER 20, 1898

O Youth, to me unknown, the tear I drop  
For thy most cruel and untimely fate,  
Falls not for thee so much as for those friends  
Of mine, friends of my early years, who lose  
In thee their hope, their pride, their joy.  
Thou thy life account hath closed; human life  
Thou hast accomplished; not rounded and complete,  
For such is not the law of earthly growth —  
The most perfect, largest fruit shows that one  
Still greater, fairer still, was planned;  
Man leaves unfinished e'en the longest life.

Harsh and sudden was thy taking off,  
Bitter were thy pangs but short. Soon thou foundest  
The last and best relief and Death, the foe,  
Proved thy best friend.  
Each day thou builtest on thy life as does  
The mason on a wall, daily adding  
That which was to cause thy future joy or grief.  
Upon that building thou shalt work no more;  
As thou hast left it it must stand, for the  
Yoke of daily care and toils thou art outspanned;  
Naught can vex or harm thee now; naught of ill  
Can ever reach thee. 'Tis well with thee, neither  
In life nor death hast thou escaped Him—It,

That Almighty Power, that called thee forth  
 And bade thee act thy part till called from off  
 Life's stage. We have no fears for thee for thou  
 Art with It, the Oversoul, the All, which  
 Mighty power within us and without  
 We know and feel making for righteousness.  
 Thou art relieved, released, set free, enfranchised;  
 But they who mourn thee — what of them?  
 Their load's increased, their burden greater;  
 Harder and harder still to bear life's pain.  
 Thou wast the object of their love, to thee,  
 To thee the parents' hearts turned fond and proud.  
 That love still lives, but thou art not!  
 Nature's order seems reversed; thou shouldst shed  
 Upon their bier thy filial tears, but they,  
 Instead, now bury thee with broken hearts.  
 They grope in darkness, seeking what may  
 Stay their souls and find, alas, but this —  
 The same which in his bitter hours, with tears  
 Repentant and abased, the warrior king  
 Found, as so many since his day,  
 He cannot come to us but we can go  
 To him.

This afterglow of his gifted mind he has left for our contemplation; very soon after writing this his pen grew still forever.

The month of December holds two anniversaries that must ever bring to Sister Ida and me, yes and to the families of our two brothers, a memory that touches the deep places of the heart with a long sweep on those chords that must echo with sadness to the end of the journey. December 19, 1898, Brother William passed away from us, all too soon we could but feel. He was sixty-two years old, while our people have generally lived to be past seventy and even beyond eighty. Our dear mother, however, was but sixty-six when her call came. Thirteen years after Brother William's death and upon another December day, the twenty-first, our younger brother, Joseph, left this earth far away upon the island of Jamaica. As I finish the last chapter in this book in the year that took from me my companion of more than fifty years of married life and in the last month of the year and consider that

this month was the one that saw our brothers pass into the silence, it cannot be of holidays that I am thinking. My thoughts are back in the past that gave me the loved ones and took them from me into those scenes unpenetrated by mortal eye. A year ago this Christmastime my husband wrote to a friend upon our western coast:

Here I am upon my sick-bed where I have been most of the time for six months. No sound of the breaking waves of the deep sea, no murmurings of the rolling surf as they wash the white sands at your feet come near my sick room. There is sweet music above and around me.

“Sunset and evening star,  
And one clear call for me,  
And may there be no moaning of the bar  
When I put out to sea—”

“Peace on earth, good will to men” is the sweetest song angels ever sang. I want the peace that passeth all understanding.

Lovingly,  
A. P. FROST.

Xmas—1911.

It is not without faith and hope that I pen these last lines, there is much in the thought of the past that brings a kind of happiness that time and death does not destroy. I love to think over what our people wrought and what others have said of them.

Among the friends of Brother William's youth none were more admired and loved than Thomas Brown who was some years older than our brother. He lost his hearing when a child and learned the sign language and so his family conversed with him. He was bright and ever on the alert to see and know what was going on. He learned to read writing in the palm of the hand which was an advantage, but his most astonishing accomplishment was that should he look across the room and see the top of a moving pencil, he would read the words as fast as they were being written on the paper which of course he could not see at that distance but just the lines described by the top of the pencil were enough for him. This feat caused him amusement at times when his friends were writing something for him and he would comprehend their thought before they had handed him the paper!

Thomas Brown made a large collection of geological specimens mostly from the blue marl along the Miami River and its tributaries. I think his collection is now in the Smithsonian Institution. He was one of William's truest old-time friends and the message he wrote after our brother's decease was indited out of a pure, strong friendship and I insert it to make it more plain how Brother William impressed his friends. This article was written for the *Waynesville* (Ohio) *Gazette-News* and I copy it entire:

Monday morning, December 19, 1898, the death angel crossed the threshold of a happy home on DeKalb street, Dayton, Ohio, and the spirit of the fond father and faithful husband, passed over the mystic river. Warnings of the summons had confronted the deceased over a year ago, and for the benefit of change of scene and climate he had gone with his brother Joseph on a trip to California and other distant places; the change did not have the desired effect, and while visiting his sister, Mrs. Datus Myers, in California, he was dangerously stricken with kidney trouble; and although the return trip to his home was painful and distressing, he with his family cherished the hope that by the help of his strong will power and robust constitution he would triumph over and baffle the disease, but gradually his strength failed until the end came, and when it came a great heart ceased to beat and a great brain ceased to work.

We knew and learned to love William Watkins in his early manhood, a strong friendship bound us together, and the friendship ripened with years. We admired him for his giant intellect and loved him for his great, noble heart, than which none more faithful to the friends of his youth or of his maturer years ever throbbed. It mattered not to him whether fortune continued to smile upon his friends or they became victims of misfortune, he was always the same friend, if his friends showed that their lives were actuated by honorable principles.

As he went, step by step, from the position of a sub-district school teacher to take his rightful place in the ranks of the foremost educators of the day, we watched with interest his advancement and were proud to call him friend.

Our meetings in later years were few and far between, but the tie of friendship was never severed nor loosened; and as circumstances favored us with more frequent meetings in the last few years, his varied scholarship, his advanced ideas, his broadening of character seemed but the rich maturity of the promise of earlier years. His brain was busy with the problems of life, problems involving the greater interests of humanity, with every thought modified by the



pulsations of a heart throbbing with brotherly love, with a character free from all insincerity or sordidness. The keynote of his life was honesty, and the ruling passion love. With him love was the fulfilling of the law. In manner he was simple and unaffected, neither haughty nor obsequious. He respected worth in all conditions and loved virtue for its own sake. Strong in his own convictions, and having the courage of the same when occasion called for their expression, he was ever lenient to those who differed from him and considerably refrained from forcing his opinions upon friends whose views differed from his own.

It was said of a noted statesman that his manner was so gentle and kind that when an office seeker applied for a place and had to be disappointed, the refusal came in so kindly a manner that he would actually make a friend of the applicant, although formerly he might have been personally hostile to him. Mr. Watkins' manner was similar. In the discussion of differences his manner was so kind that the average man or woman could not help but regret that they could not agree with him, and left him with sentiments of increased respect, though his peculiar views along certain lines estranged from him some who were too intolerant to be influenced by his genial manner, and these estrangements were most keenly felt by him to the last day of his life.

He hated, with all the intensity of his strong character, oppression in all its forms. He was a representative of lofty ideals, ideals too unselfish to be practical in a selfish world. He was an advanced thinker, which consigned him to the ranks of the minority; but the world in its revolutions of thought and by the logic of events more than once came around to his standpoint. He was an avowed abolitionist when such an avowal was odious; but he lived to see the ideas he began to advance with force and ability when a mere boy, and to which he adhered through life, adopted by our government and recognized as correct by the people.

William Watkins was pre-eminently a family man; his children and their families were his pride and his joy; to them he was a rallying point, a patriarch. His home life was marked by unrestrained confidence as well as beautiful simplicity; into his domicile, rich with literature, the gatherings of years, he ever welcomed his friends, and his unaffected hospitality was emphasized by wife and children, who may now well say, "What have we not lost in the death of such a husband and father?"

Farewell, friend, until we meet in richer fields and on a higher plane of intellectual and spiritual life.

Chaplain J. K. Lewis (retired) of the United States Navy, a warm personal friend of our brother, spoke at his funeral



services upon the text: "Love is the fulfilling of the law."  
He said in his sermon:

The man whose mortal remains lie before us believed in the reign of law in this world. He was my friend, and I knew much of his way of thinking. He was a man in many ways of most unusual interest. His surpassing characteristics were but little understood. He was known as an educator in our common schools. His intellectual attainments would have fitted him for a high place in our universities. But it is rather of the moral and spiritual side of the man I would speak. It was that which chiefly attracted my interest. As a lover of his kind, as a believer in essential right and justice, he came to be known in the world of reform, of truth, and of equity among men. . . . He had looked out over life's evil social conditions and his heart had been stirred to its depths for the sorrows of men, brought upon them by the cruel and persistent selfishness of the powerful. The agitation of his pitiful heart never ceased. There was a forceful greatness of soul in him that would not give up to the easy-going conclusions of so many, that these sorrows of men had always existed and would always exist and could not be helped. The spirit of the man was larger, grander, mightier than this. He believed the very forces of God and nature were on his side, the side of justice. We need not here and now consider the methods by which he hoped to see unjust social conditions obliterated; what we speak of is rather his full and perfect confidence in the possibility not only of the amelioration of these conditions, but of their complete remedy. For this, his confidence, I loved the man, as I admired him for his phenomenal mental ability and acquirements. It was inspiring to hear him express with unqualified assurance his expectation of the time when men should live together according to a law of perfect altruism, of love and justice. To me it was the expression of a confidence of the time when Christ's prayer, "Thy Kingdom come," should be fulfilled.

For more than half a century I have preserved a letter written by the hand of our mother. It lies before me now; the writing is clear, though the paper is yellow. It was written to me while I was at the Hunt's and she and father and Ida were in Harrison. In it is what I would like to make the very keynote of these voices from our past. The mother who wrote this letter to me, her eldest daughter, was one in whom each one of her children had the greatest confidence; we believed her a loving, a wise, a true mother. I would like each one of her posterity in particular to read the part she wrote for them whom

she was never to see. The letter appended is from my little sister, written in her fourteenth year.

Harrison, Ohio, September 1, 1858.

MY DEAR SWEET DAUGHTER:, I have deferred writing to hear from you. The noon mail brought the welcome news that you are still blest with health and peace. We are also well through grace. Father and Sister Krewson left for Iowa on Monday morning. She is visiting her father in Illinois, just below Burlington. I presume father will write to you when he gets to his journey's end. We got a letter from your brother William. They are much pleased with the place, have got a commodious house, and were very cordially received, which would help him to begin his school in good spirits.

You would scarcely believe what a nice quilted skirt I have got out of my old cloak. I put in more than a spool of thread; and I finished quilting my old debeige dress this evening, and to-morrow shall put in Ida's challis skirt. If you need any this winter you had better quilt it soon, for we do not know where our lot may be cast. If father likes the place and concludes to move, we will go this fall. Brother Lowrie told us there were no lung diseases there. You just get the shoes that please you, and we will do the best we can for you. I was much gratified that you spent two dollars in the church contribution. I want to leave two useful women behind me to bless the circle in which they move; and you will never forget, "Impart your portion to the poor." I want the influence of that precept to be felt in all my posterity for ages to come. Ida goes up to the college and I have the work to do. Emerson has gained six pounds since Joe came down. He has improved in looks and color very much, but yesterday and to-day is not well. He will visit Antioch after father returns. He enjoys himself first rate with us. Write often, dear daughter; your letters cheer me.

Your mother,  
S. W.

Thursday evening, 9 o'clock.

DEAREST SISTER: I have just gone over my arithmetic lesson twice and thought I would write to you just a few lines, for I have not got time to write scarcely any. Oh, I do love to go to school! I had no "idee" of liking it so well. I know you would like it, though they gave us twelve pages in fractions for to-morrow and twelve pages in grammar. I have to study pretty hard; it won't kill me though, I guess. I am going to (at least Mr. Oyler wants me to) take up "Watts on the Mind." I do not know how I will like it. Mrs. Oyler gave us a lecture to-day for talking to the boys from the third porch when they were on the ground — said it was the height of ill manners, and said the young men would not think half as much of

us as if we would never speak to them in school. They try their best to keep us from talking or even speaking to the boys. They make a pretty good out at it, too, for the girls get no chance to speak to them; but I can't write any more. I wish I had one of those little puppies. You must write.

Ever yours,

IDA.

Mother's entire life was one of kindness and of love. The sentence she has indicated in her letter as too familiar to need quoting entire is from the sayings of John Rogers, who died a martyr's death in Sheffield, England. Completed the couplet is:

Impart your portion to the poor in money and in meat,  
And send the feeble, fainting soul that of which you do eat.

I would it were written large in the memories of us each. I can only hope that if these lines are read from generation to generation, our children and our children's children may remember that this dear and noble mother desired that the influence of this precept should be felt in all her "posterity for ages to come."

Our father wrote much for publication, mostly exegesis. He wrote hymns and some other poems, but not a great number. Only when deeply stirred did he write in verse. His stanzas entitled "Jacob's Well" I have always liked, and I will copy them here:

Jesus at Samaria's well,  
Weary, thirsty, sat alone;  
While in search of scanty food  
Every worn disciple's gone.  
Who was blest in worlds above,  
Suffering, shows His Father's love.

Lo, there came a Magdalen  
From the city's lofty gate,  
Full of scorn for every Jew  
And Samaritanic hate.  
Jesus sits upon a stone  
At Samaria's well alone.

Faint with heat and thirst He asks  
Water from that ancient well,  
And His uncomplaining voice  
Hidden sorrows may not tell;  
But He asks as charity  
What to all men should be free.

But the proud Samaritan  
Answered with indignant scorn:  
"Dost thou ask a drink of me?  
Thou an enemy wast born;  
And a Jew can never claim  
Favor of Samaritan!"

Jesus mildly interposed:  
"Hadst thou known the power of God —  
Hadst thou known who talks to thee  
By this weary, thirsty road —  
Thou hadst asked and I would give  
Waters evermore that live!"

Proud and beautiful she stands,  
Stooping o'er that ancient well,  
And upon her listening ear  
Christ's own searching accents fell;  
And her pride soon turned to shame  
At the kind reproof that came.

All the sins and pain and grief  
Of an aimless life of shame  
Clearly to her memory rose  
With a self-reproving blame.  
"Lonely stranger, canst thou be  
Prophet, priest and Christ to me?"

Jesus at Samaria's well,  
Weak and weary sat alone;  
Trembling, faint for meat and drink,  
Till the Father's work was done!  
He who now in Heaven doth dwell  
Lowly sat at Jacob's well!"

While our father wrote much for our religious journals, he published but little in a form to come down to us, being mostly in periodicals of years ago. This we regret. He wrote

a fine essay once for *The Christian Quarterly*, which had for a title "The Correlation of Creation and Salvation." It was a most learned essay, upon which he expended much thought and labor. The leading thought which impressed me in this production was the vastness of God's designs in creating and concealing in deep, dark mines rich stores of silver and gold, laid up for the time when our infant race should reach out to become a mighty people, and when God should call us to fulfil our great mission among the nations of the earth — to preach among the heathen "the unsearchable riches" of Christ.

While we were still young children, father found a work which he believed should be generally desirable, for it gave him the greatest delight — this was Scott's Book of Job. It was brought forth from an English edition and was a rare work, published in 1773 by Thomas Scott, who was a learned man of deep research. As the edition was out of print, father borrowed the copy he had come across and wrote out with his own pen every word of the book. This was indeed a great labor for one so deficient in sight. He also added notes to the original edition and then had stereotype plates made and got out a large edition in 1848, but he found that its lofty style and splendid diction were not readily admired and appreciated by the average reader. While he did not lose on the work I remember that there was not enough call for it to make the plates he had made of any value to preserve. Our father finally sold these heavy lead plates to a publishing house in Cincinnati for refuse lead.

I want to leave on these pages of ours for his descendants a few stanzas that were favorites of his, and which he has often repeated to us in mighty declamation.

## CHAPTER IX

- 1, 2. I know, Job answered, verily I know,  
Wrong from Eternal Justice ne'er can flow.
3. How should a mortal stand, in judgment stand,  
Adverse to God? How answer each demand,  
Answer one charge, if He, severely just,  
Tax with a thousand faults this thing of dust?



4. Who safely can a strife with Him prolong —  
Him, wisest, strongest of the wise and strong?
5. Rocks from their bases leap before His frown;  
He, ere they feel it, hurls the mountains down!
6. Earth staggers from her seat, her pillar'd frame  
Trembles through terror of His dreadful name!
7. Aw'd by His thund'ring voice, the prince of day  
Shuts his broad eye and veils his golden ray;  
And night's pale queen, with her attendant fires,  
Beneath His signet in eclipse retires.
8. King of the flood, along the heav'ns He bends,  
And in His cloudy car upon the deep descends;  
The roaring billows threaten earth and sky;  
His wheels along the watery mountains fly!
9. He formed Arcturus and his sons to roll  
In bright succession 'round the northern pole.  
The vernal Pleiades His will perform,  
And stern Orion wakes the wintry storm;  
While, far below, the southern heaven proclaims  
His glory sparkling in ten thousand flames!
10. Wonders by Him and mighty deeds are wrought,  
Beyond all number and above all thought!

Before I submit these annals for publication, I am impressed with the fact that the coming years will enhance what value there is to our family in this simple story which has been mine to relate. I am our only survivor whose memory reaches so far back into the past — by tradition it touches the year 1800. The life of our prime progenitor alone, the life of Benjamin Utter Watkins, so full of victorious strife, seems to me a fitting apology for the appearance of this history of his times.

In a letter written to my husband and myself in 1889 he leaves a testimony to what the toilsome study of his youth had meant to him in his age. This is what he says:

My health is so delicate that I am unable to do much at study of any kind, especially writing. However, I have soothed many a tedious hour in reading the Greek Testament. I take it by course, reading a chapter or so a day, when unable to do anything else. But over and above the soothing influence of this exercise, it serves to refresh a memory that otherwise would go rapidly to decay. When thus snatching sweets from hours otherwise tedious and tasteless, I persuade myself that this satisfaction amply repays all the labor I expended in the acquisition of sacred Greek.



Our father did not allow his Latin to grow rusty either. Late in his life there appeared an editorial in one of the papers of the Christian Church which was under the caption: "A Latin Epistle." It speaks of the writer having received a Latin greeting from our father during a large national convention of the church in Indianapolis, Indiana. This is a part of the editorial and the Latin greeting and translation:

This reveals Brother Watkins as one of those elderly gentlemen who doesn't get old. He will never grow old inside if he does outside. He is like a splendid big oak that began as a little twig and keeps that twig for a young heart, even if centuries of exogenous layers come around it in after life; but let the letter speak for itself.

"B. U. Watkinsius amato fratri Thomæ Munnell, V. D. M.; salve, gratia, misericordia et pax sunt tibi et omnibus fratribus magni convocationis Indianapole. Convenire cum vobis nisi in spiritu et precibus non possum. Uxor mittit amorem Christianum. Vale."

Which being literally interpreted is: "B. U. Watkins to the beloved Thomas Munnell, minister of the Word of God; health, grace, mercy and peace be to you and to all the brethren of the great convocation at Indianapolis. I am not able to be with you except in spirit and in prayers. My wife sends Christian love. Farewell."

Our father was widely loved by those he called his brethren. In these annals I have related his history without any particular embellishment, giving his cardinal virtues — honesty, purity, and piety — as the legacy he has left to his descendants. He taught us the value of truth by precept and example, and I cannot escape the conviction that though dead he yet speaks in his children and his children's children. Though all may not recognize the fact, it seems to me that even the notable success of the great business built up by our brother Joseph has been brought about by the inherent honesty transmitted from our father. I remember some years ago when this came to me as a truth, that our father's works follow him; for although he was not a great financier he had within himself that fund of honesty which is the key to substantial success.

I want to leave two useful women  
behind me to bless the circle in  
which they move and you will  
never forget "impart your portion  
to the poor" I want the influence  
of that precept to be felt in all  
my posterity for ages to come

Extract from Letter of Sophronia K. Watkins



So to the generations of our father I would present this view of him and entreat them that they emulate his example.

It is Christmas eve, and as Adelaide and I sit alone in our home it is strange, and yet, perhaps, not strange, that my mind has taken a leap back over some sixty years. I see our father arise and go out under the Christmas stars. It is a night much like this very night upon which I write — a blanket of white on the ground, and deep blue, star-gemmed sky above. We children see our father return, with his hair as white as the snow and his face with some of the starlight glow in it. He seats himself and begins to write. What he wrote that Christmas eve so long ago was in a hymnal we see no longer in our churches, but at one time his adaptation of the words of that Christmas hymn were sung at this glad time. He changed the lines of the more ancient hymn here and there to suit his feeling of beautiful expression.

Through the long, long silence it floats to me adown the air of this very Christmas eve:

When, marshaled on the nightly plain,  
The glittering hosts bestud the sky,  
One star alone of all the train  
Attracts the eastern sage's eye.

A voice from every star there breaks  
Throughout eve's radiant diadem;  
One star alone the Saviour speaks —  
It is the Star of Bethlehem.

It almost seems that the voices of the past are clearer to-night than even the voices of my grandchildren as they make their merry plans for the morrow or disclose some secret not yet to be told the others at home.

We count ourselves happy that we have lived in the nineteenth century — “the age on ages telling to be living is sublime!” It was indeed the beginning of a glorious era. We have seen its radiant beams spreading forth, not only over our own country, but, like the statue of Liberty Enlightning the World, it shines out across the sea. The accomplishment of

the nineteenth century is the prophecy of greater things to come, so to the rising generation we will leave the new century, whose morning we see swiftly speeding away. You must finish our story, write our books, build our annals. Will you learn from our mistakes to achieve greater successes? I lay down my pen upon this closed volume with a parting word: We need the Sacred Book of the Old and New Testament to guide us through the crises of life's journey; and with this thought I end, and say, "Farewell."

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With dearest love and  
best wishes for a Happy  
Christmas and many of  
them.

From Mother & Father.

We regret not being able to  
have this book bound for  
you but hope someday you  
may be able to have it done.

The book was sent to us  
by Mr. Paul Watkins, President  
of the J.R. Watkins Co., Winona,  
Minn., who's Aunt, Julia  
Watkins Frook wrote it.

We are sorry that only the  
first chapter contains











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JUN 23 1953



